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SRIKRISHNA ;
HIS LIFE AND TEACHINGS,
VOL II.

*" My delusion is gone, O Lord,
I now know what I am."
Gita, Chap. XVIII.*



BY
DHIRENDRA NATH PAL.



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PREFACE.

Through the grace of Him whose wonderful Life and more wonderful Teachings I most humbly tried to place before my readers, I have at last been able to bring this little book to its completion. I allow it to go before the world as it is, hoping my readers will have kind consideration for the innumerable short-comings of its humble author. It is needless to say that I have not been able to paint Srikrishna as he really was, for I am too insignificant to grasp and appreciate his most sublime Life and Teachings,—a task beyond perhaps all human intellect. But this is only an humble attempt to remove the false notion entertained about Him by many people both in the East and the West. He is, the Greatest of all men ever born,—He is the most glorious Manifestation of God in human form,—how is it possible for a man like my humble self to paint him?

I am, however, glad to acknowledge my heart-felt gratitude to many of my wealthy countrymen. It would suffice to say that they most liberally patronized my humble work, so much so that I shall have to issue a second edition at no distant date.

My thanks are also due to those great scholars and writers whose works I have consulted and from whose works I have derived a considerable help. I have consulted about one thousand works, therefore it would be a long list to name them all. It would be also invidious to mention some and leave others. I therefore, tender my

best thanks to one and all of them, though I do not mention them each by name. Without their most valuable help, it would have been impossible for me to write this work. India and India's people are deeply indebted to these great men.

Calcutta, 1st February, 1898.

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SRIKRISHNA.

CHAPTER I.

DEITY AND DUTY.

" YOU grieve, " * said Krishna, " for those that deserve no grief ; and at the same time you utter words of wisdom. But a man of knowledge do not grieve for the living or for the dead. Neither I, nor you, nor these kings were ever non-existent, and again none of us will ever cease hereafter to exist. As childhood, youth and old age are but

* As the life and career of Srikrishna have been written by various men in various ways, as he has been painted as each believed him to be, so has his great teachings, the celebrated Gita, been written and commented upon as each thought its true meanings to be. As Krishna has been used by the great founders of the various Hindu sects to popularise their own peculiar views and doctrines, so has the ever famous Gita been used by them to spread their own religions. Thus innumerable commentaries, notes, keys, criticisms and essays on the Gita have been written in Sanskrit and in the various languages of India. Great Sankara wrote a commentary on the Gita, so did Ananda Giri, so did Sridhara Swami, so did many others ; but all attempted to popularise their own peculiar sects, doctrines and philosophies with the help of this most wonderful book. Thus has Gita been made the Great Book of all sorts of religions and religious sects that exist in India. Thus has it become the great Store-house of all Aryan thoughts. It has, therefore, become impossible now to make every one take the same view of this most wonderful book of the world.

- But our course is clear. Our readers must remember that we are writing a history and not any treatise on religion. Nor do we pretend to show any great scholarship and study by quoting the opinions of various great men who have commented upon this famous work.

changes in the body of man, so death is but a change. A man of knowledge is never deluded by it."*

"The contact of senses with the internal objects which produces cold and heat, pleasure and pain, are not permanent, because they have beginnings and ends. Therefore,† O Arjuna, you must bear them.‡ The

We shall, therefore, stick only to what Gita says without taking into our consideration what others say or said about it. We shall quote the Gita, making our quotations as literal translations as possible. We shall give the simplest, the plainest and the most ordinary meanings of its wonderful words. But we must earnestly ask our readers to read a complete Gita, if not in the original, at least in a good translation.

* We must here mention that Gita is an episode in the Mahavarata. It begins from chapter XXV., Bhishma Parva and ends in chapter XLII. It is spoken by Sanjaya to the old blind king Dhritarastra, when he asked what took place on the field of Kurushkhetra when his sons and the Pandavas had encamped. Sanjaya was blessed with the power of omniscience; through this power he came to know what conversations took place between Krishna and Arjuna, although he never heard it with his own ears.

† He explains this more elaborately later on.

‡ We do not believe, and no one can believe, that the Gita as it now exists was *de facto* recited by Krishna before Arjuna. It would be unnatural for obvious reasons. Do people talk in verse? Was there the art of phonography known then? Even Sanjaya came to know of it through some supernatural power; he never personally heard it recited. It is nowhere mentioned in the Mahavarata that the Rishi Vyasa was present when Krishna told it to Arjuna, or when Sanjaya recited it to the king. Thus we can by no means trace the Gita, as it now exists, to Krishna. It has also been clearly proved by many great oriental scholars (see Telang's Introduction of Gita in the Sacred Books of the East.) that the present Gita is a work written many years subsequent to the time when the *original* Mahavarata was written.

But by whomsoever written, it was written based on the teachings of Srikrishna. It could not be otherwise. We must state our reasons.

Firstly:—At the outset we say, Krishna really delivered a lecture to the Pandavas just before the great battle, and Vyasa must have briefly mentioned it in the original Mahavarata that he wrote. The reason, why we say that Vyasa wrote a brief account of Srikrishna's teachings, the elaborate development of which is Gita as it now stands, is that it is quite *natural* that Arjuna and the Pandavas

man who is learned in the true knowledge, whom the contact of senses cannot afflict, and to whom pain and

should be filled with great despondency when they came face to face with their dearest friends and relatives whose death meant their victory. If there was a battle and that battle was really fought between the Pandavas and the Kurus as undisputedly it was (See introduction), it was a fact also that the Pandavas were filled with great despondency, and that they thought it better for them to go back to exile than to kill their beloved uncle, grandfather, preceptor and others. It is impossible that the fact should be otherwise, for it would be then something unnatural,—something beyond the pale of natural laws.

If then it was a fact that the Pandavas were filled with great despondency, it was also a fact that Krishna removed their despondency and induced them to fight. He must have told them something extraordinary, or else men like Arjuna, Yudhishthira and others would not have agreed to kill their dearest kinsmen. If some extraordinary teachings were not given to the Pandavas by Krishna, the battle would never have been fought.

Such being the case, the great Vyasa when describing the battle must have mentioned Krishna's teachings in the Mahavarata that he originally wrote. A great writer like Vyasa could not leave such a gap in his work. In fact if the Gita is withdrawn from the Mahavarata, every thoughtful student will find that there would be a very great gap in the whole story. Without the Gita in the Mahavarata all the great characters of the story fall to the ground; they appear to be painted in the darkest hue. It is an impossibility in such a writer as Vyasa. Therefore we say, Krishna delivered a lecture to the Pandavas, which lecture was briefly mentioned by Vyasa in the original Mahavarata. A subsequent great writer wrote the present wonderful Gita in verse based on this wonderful teachings.

Secondly :—(a) The teachings of the Gita are peculiar; they are novel and new, and they do not coincide with any other teachings in any other religious books of the Hindus. They have some speciality of their own. They stand alone in their grandeur in the midst of the various grand teachings with which the Hindu sacred books are replete. Such being the case, one is naturally led to ask who is the originator of these wonderful teachings. One is bound at the sametime to say that they must belong to him alone with whose words they coincide. If our readers read the whole of the Hindu Sastras, they will find that the peculiar and novel teachings,—the essence of the Gita,—coincide with none except with the words of Krishna as scattered all through the Mahavarata.

(b) It is evident from the meagre accounts that we get of Sri Krishna in the Puranas and the Mahavarata that he founded and preached a new religion; but neither the Puranas nor the Maha-

pleasure are alike, merits *Moksha* (final imancipation) There is no existence of that which is *asat*, and there is no non-existence of that which is *sat*.* Those that are truly learned perceive the correct ends of both. Know, that which pervades all this universe is indestructible ; none can destroy that imperishable Principle. The material body only (as that of a man) of that ever-lasting, indestructible, infinite but embodied Self is said to be perishable. Therefore, O Arjuna, engage in battle.”†

“ He, who thinks that it (the great Self in man) is the killer, and he who thinks that it is killed, either of them

varata clearly say what it was. The little of his teachings that we meet with in the Puranas and the Mahavarata lead one to conclude that his religion could not but be that which has been told in the Gita. (See our note in Vol. II.)

(c) We have said that Krishna must have told something very extraordinary to induce the Pandavas to kill their dearest kinsmen. What could it be ? If we explore the whole sea of the Sanskrit lore, we do not find anything any where except what we find in this Gita which can make a man kill his dearest relatives when it is his *duty* to do it,—believing at the same time that he is performing a *virtuous* act.

(d) The Gita preaches a religion and pictures a man who is the result of such a religion. The Gita's model is a perfect man,—a man greatest in everything and in every way,—a man who is the highest ideal of virtue and piety, knowledge and learning, might and prowess,—a man who has gone beyond the influences of his mind, not to speak of his body,—a man who has become master over both Matter and Spirit,—a man whose self has disappeared in the Great Self, though he lives, moves and acts as a human being. Search the entire Sanskrit literature, nay all the literatures and histories of the world, and show us a man to the Gita's model. But put Srikrishna before you and say with all impartiality whether he is not the only character found in history and literature which can be called the great Gita's model. If this be the case, we must say Gita's great words could not have been uttered by any one else except the greatest of all men, Srikrishna.

* *Sat* means that which exists ; *Asat* is its opposite state. Universe is the combination of *Sat* and *Asat*.

† Krishna means to say that when death is *unreal*, and therefore virtually it is nothing, then there is no harm in killing, for killing means also nothing, because it is *unreal*.

knows nothing, for it neither kills nor is killed. It is never born, it never dies ; having existed, it does never become non-existent. It is unborn, everlasting, unchangeable and ancient. It is not killed, though its body is killed. How and whom can that man kill or cause to be killed who knows his great Self to be unborn, indestructible, everlasting, and imperishable ? As a man casts off his worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, so does this embodied Self casts off old bodies and enters into new ones. Weapon does not cut this great Self ; fire does not burn it ; water does not moist it ; wind does not dry it. It is not to be cut, not to be burnt, not to be moistened and not to be dried up. It is everlasting, all-pervading, stable, firm, eternal, ever-continuing, not perceivable, inconceivable and unchangeable. Therefore, knowing it to be such, you ought not to grieve.*

“ And again, if you think, O Arjuna, that this great Self constantly takes birth and constantly dies, even then you ought not thus to grieve ; for death is certain

* The most exalted preceptor, the great preacher and scholar Sankara says :—“ This Gita is the summary of all the meanings of the Vedas. If the true meaning of this book is really and perfectly understood, *Dharma* (virtue), *Artha* (wealth), *Kama* (pleasures) and *Moksha* (salvation) are gained.”

The *Gita Mahatman* says :—“ All the Upanishadas are the cow ; Krishna, the cow-herd boy, is the milcher ; Arjuna is the calf ; the Devotee is the drinker of the milk ; and the Gita is the milk of that cow.”

Such being the case, we do not pretend to say that we have been able to explain Gita in any way. We, as an humble historian, have dealt with facts and facts alone : and as facts, we quote Gita as we find it without any commentary of our own. We do not give our view, or the view of any one else ; we give the Gita as it is. In our humble opinion the Gita is perfect in itself. One who is *really eager* to understand it, can do it without the help of any one else. We have explained the Gita by the Gita itself, for in our humble opinion the Gita is the best commentary of the Gita.

to one who is born, and birth is certain to one who is dead. Therefore you ought not to grieve for such unavoidable matters."

"In the beginning, O Arjuna, all beings are unmanifest; in the middle they are manifest, and at the end they are unmanifest again. What is there then to be sorry for? One sees this phenomenon as a wonder; others hear of it as a wonder, but even hearing of it, none can understand it."

"This indestructible embodied Self, O Arjuna, is in the body of every one.* Therefore you ought not to grieve for the death of any beings."†

"And again, looking to your own duty pertaining to your own caste, you ought not to waver to fight. There is nothing better to a *Khashtrya*‡ than a righteous battle. Happy are those *Khashtryas* who get such a battle to fight,—a battle that comes of itself, and which is the open gate to heaven."§

* Krishna means that the great Deity is in every man. It is that Great Self and none else who appears in the world in an embodied form as man.

† The Gita, chapter XV., slokas 7-11 say:—"An everlasting portion of me (God), becoming an individual Self in this world, draws to itself the five senses with the mind as the sixth. They all depend on Nature. When this Self, the King of the body, assumes or quits the body, it departs taking them away as the fragrance. Presiding over the ear, the eye, the organs of touch, taste and smell and the mind, it enjoys all the objects of senses. Those that are deluded do not see it when it remains in the body, or when it quits it, when it enjoys, or when it is joined with qualities. Those however who have the eye of knowledge see it."

‡ *Khashtrya* is the warrior caste. We have more than once said in this book that when Krishna was born there was no regular caste system in India. This word and other such words indicate that the Gita was subsequently written.

§ In reading the Gita our readers must mark a few words, which have been differently explained by different commentators. We shall point them out as we proceed.

"If you do not fight this righteous battle, you will incur sin by abandoning your duty and sacrificing your fame. Every man will proclaim your everlasting infamy. To him who is honoured, infamy is a greater calamity than death. All the great car-warriors will think that you abstain from the battle through fear. You will be lightly thought of by those who honoured you before. Decrying your powers, your enemies will say of you things unutterable. What could be more painful to you than this? If you be killed, you will go to heaven; and if you be victorious, you will enjoy the whole world. Therefore, O Arjuna, be resolved to fight. Arise.*

"Considering pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, all equal and same, be ready for fight; you will then incur no sin."†

* Krishna then says, "The knowledge now imparted to you is relating to *Sankhya*. Now listen to *Yoga*, which, if well-possessed, cuts off *Karmabandhanam*. We shall explain *Sankhya*, and *Yoga* later on. *Karmabandhanam* means the binding laws of rebirths resulting from the effects of actions performed in this life. Our readers will be able to understand it more fully when they will read the whole of Srikrishna's Great Teachings.

† The sentence italicised is the key-note of Srikrishna's teachings.

CHAPTER II.

ACTION AND DEVOTION.

"O ARJUNA," continued Krishna, "the understanding of devotional men* is of one branch; but undevoational men's understanding† is of many branches.‡ The Vedas relate of the three qualities.§ Rise beyond the influences

* *Buddhi* is translated by *Understanding*. *Buddhi* is placed above *Mana* (mind); above *Baddhi* is *Atman* (soul or self).

† We have translated the word *Byavasahi* by *Devotional men*. It means those that have firm faith in God. The *sloka* means that a man whose mind is devotional never thinks of any thing else but God, but an undevoational man's mind is full of many matters,—such as wealth, fame, pleasures, luxuries &c. &c.¶ We must say it is very difficult to convey the exact idea of these and other Sanskrit words by English equivalents.

‡ Just after this are four *slokas*, 42-44, and 46, chap. II. They are a covert attack on the Vedas. We give the translation. "Those that are not learned, those that delight in the Vedas, those that say there is nothing else, those that are fond of worldly pleasures, those that regard heaven as the highest object for acquisition, say flowery words about the birth resulting from the fruits of actions and about multifarious rites (such as sacrifices) that promise to give wealth and enjoyments. Those whose minds have been stolen by the lovers of enjoyments and wealth can have no such devotional feelings as to make them live in God." The word is *Samadhi*; we translate it by *living in God*. We shall have to speak more of this word later on.

And again *sloka* 46 says—"The utility of the Vedas to a Bramha-knowing man is as much as that of a small tank when all places are flooded with water."

§ Three qualities are *Satwa*, *Raja* and *Tama*. The Gita itself clearly explains them in its chapter XIV. *slokas* 5-16. It says:—"*Satwa*, *Raja* and *Tama*, these three qualities of Nature bind down the eternal Self in the body of beings. Amongst the three, *Satwa*, from its untainted nature, from its being enlightening, and from its being free from misery, keeps the Self bound with the attachment of happiness and knowledge. *Raja*, having desire for its essence,

of these three qualities.* Be unaffected by heat or cold, pleasure and pain. Be steady always in Bramha (the Supreme one); be free from anxiety for new acquisitions and from anxiety for the preservation of old ones. Be self-satisfied.† You have concern only with actions and

is of thirst and attachment. Therefore it binds the embodied Self with the attachment of work. *Tama* is born of ignorance and therefore it deludes the embodied Self. It binds the Self in error, indolence and sleep. *Satwa* unites the Self with happiness, *Raja* with works, and *Tama* with error."

"*Satwa* remains if *Raja* and *Tama* are repressed. *Tama* remains if *Satwa* and *Raja* are repressed, and *Raja* remains if *Satwa* and *Tama* are repressed. When knowledge pervades everything in this body, then should one know that *Satwa* has been developed. When avarice, activity, fondness for works, want of tranquility and desire are born in this body, then should one know that *Raja* has been developed. When gloom, inactivity, error and delusion are born in this body, then should one know that *Tama* has been developed. The fruit of *Satwa* is good and untainted; the fruit of *Raja* is misery and the fruit of *Tama* is ignorance."

* What did Krishna mean by "rising beyond the influences of these three qualities?" He himself explains it in the Gita, chapter XIV., slokas 22-26.

"He, who has no aversion for knowledge, work or ignorance (the results of these three qualities) when they are present, and he who does not long for them when they are absent, has risen beyond these three qualities. He, who remains unconcerned, having been not shaken by these three qualities, who sits and moves not, thinking that it is the qualities and not he who is engaged in their functions, has risen beyond these three qualities. He, to whom pain and pleasures are alike, who is self-restrained, to whom a sod of earth, a stone, a piece of gold are all alike, to whom the agreeables and the disagreeables are the same, to whom praise and censure are alike, has risen beyond these three qualities. He, to whom honour and dishonour are the same, to whom friends and foes are alike, who has discernment and who has renounced all self-exertion, has risen beyond these three qualities. He, who worships me (God) with exclusive devotion, has risen beyond the three qualities and has become fit for admission into the nature of Bramha.

† In this sloka there are a few words very difficult to be translated into English. We have given above mere a vague idea of them. We have translated the word *Atmaban* by *Self-satisfied*. It does not give the exact idea. When our readers will read the entire Gita, then they will know what *Atmaban* really means. See Vol I, page 75, the words of Srikrishna,

not with their fruits. Never the fruits of actions be your motive and aim. Do not also by any means have attachment in inaction.* Casting off all attachments and considering success and non-success the same, O Arjuna, perform actions in *Yoga*.† Such *Equanimity* in performing actions is called *Yoga*."

"Sacrifices and other religious rites‡ (which go by the name of *Yoga*.) are far inferior to the *Yoga of Knowledge*;§ therefore attain to the *Yoga of Knowledge*. The men that desire for the fruits of actions are pitiable. A *Yogee of Knowledge*|| abandons both sin and virtue. Therefore apply yourself to *Yoga*. Such *Cleverness* in action is called *Yoga*.'¶

* Krishna has explained later on what is "action" and what is "inaction."

† The present meaning of *Yoga* is some mysterious processes and hard austerities such as *Pranayama* &c by which one is said to attain to *Bramha*. It was originally written upon by Rishi *Patanjali*; it is one of the six Hindu philosophical systems, and is known by the name of *Patanjal Yoga Darsanam*.

Yoga literally means "addition" "co-mingling," "jointing" &c. In the *Gita* it means a certain systems by which one can attain to, or join or co-mingle with *Bramha*. We meet in the *Gita* various sorts of *Yogas* of which *Jnana Yoga* and *Karma Yoga* are chief, i.e. attaining to *Bramha* by "knowledge" and attaining to *Bramha* by "action." The *Yoga of Action* Krishna explains above by saying, "such equanimity is called *Yoga*."

‡ The word is here *Karma*. *Karma* literally means "action," "work," but here it means sacrifices and religious rites. In the Vedic Hinduism, *Karma* has no other meaning except sacrifices &c. But in the *Gita* it means all works and actions performed by man, or, to be more definite, his "Duties."

§ Now Krishna speaks of the *Yoga of Knowledge*. The word is here *Buddhi Yoga*. All this will be elaborately dealt with later on.

|| The *Yogee of Knowledge* (*Buddhiyukta*) is one who attains to *Bramha* by "knowledge."

¶ There are many actions and works for man to perform, but all actions and works do not make a man attain to *Bramha*. Those actions and works only that lead to it should be performed. Those, that have the cleverness to perform only those acts that make a man

The learned *Yogee of Knowledge*, abandoning all fruits of actions, attains to the Highest State by being freed from the bindings of rebirths. When your understanding will leave the fortress of delusion, then will you be indifferent to all that you have heard or will hear. When your mind, confounded by the *Sruti*, (Vedas) will *remain firm in God* (without being attracted by other matters) and will *live in God*, then will you attain to *Yoga*.*

"What is the nature, O Krishna," asked Arjuna, "of one whose understanding is *firm in God* and who *lives in God*?† What does he say, how does he live, how does he move?"

"When a man," replied Krishna, "abandons all his mental desires and becomes pleased in his Self is called a man of devotion.‡ He, who is not moved in misery, who has no cravings for pleasures, and who is free from attachments, anger and fear, is called a man of devotion. He who neither feels exultation nor aversion on receiving either the good or the bad, and who withdraws all his senses from all the worldly objects of senses as a tortoise withdraws its limbs, is called a man of devotion."§

attain to Brahma, apply themselves to *Yoga*. Therefore such cleverness in action is *Yoga*.

* This is also a covert attack on the Vedas and the Vedic rites and doctrines. *Sruti* means the Vedas. In these three *Slokas* there are some words which the various commentators have variously explained to suit their purpose. *Srutibipratipanna* is an instance. Thus those slokas in which the Vedas are apparently attacked may also mean a great veneration for them,—such is the elasticity of the Sanskrit words.

† The words are *Sthithaprajna* and *Samadhista*.

‡ We have translated the word "*Sthithaprajna*" by "a man whose understanding is firm in God." To make it shorter, we use here "a man of devotion."

§ • Then Krishna says, "An abstinent man, (say a stern

"Pondering over worldly matters breeds attachments for them. From their attachment desire is produced. From desire anger is begot. From anger is produced the want of discrimination (delusion); from this delusion is produced confusion of memory; from the confusion of memory, loss of reason and understanding; and from the loss of reason, final destruction."

"The man, who has controlled his senses and is free from attachment and aversion, though he moves amongst the objects of senses, attains to Peace.* Peace being attained all miseries are destroyed. The understanding of the man who has attained to Peace soon becomes firm in God."

"An undevotional man has no understanding (firm in God); he has no contemplation (of God). He who has no such contemplation has no Peace.† Where is happiness for him who has no Peace? As the wind destroys a boat in the sea, so is the understanding of that man destroyed whose mind follows the roving senses. Therefore he whose senses are brought under control from all the objects of senses is a man of devotion. When it is night to all creatures, the self-controlled man is awake;

ascetic) may withdraw himself from all worldly objects, but he cannot abandon his mental desires. All desires fly from him only who has *seen* the Supreme; for then there remains nothing further to be desired by him. The madly boisterous senses forcibly steal the mind of even that wise man who tries to attain final emancipation. The *Yogee* solely depends upon me (God) and keeps all his senses under control. He who has brought all his senses under subjugation is a man of devotion."

* The word is *Prasad*. "Peace" does not give its full idea. It is the same as the word we have previously used, namely "Self-satisfied." It means that state of mind of the man who, as Krishna says, "becomes pleased in his self by his own self." i.e. who has no cravings whatsoever, and thus whose mind is in complete peace

Here the word is *Santi*, literally "peace."

when creatures are awake, a *Muni** sees night around him."†

"As the various waters enter the ocean but do not make any decrease or increase in it, so he in whom all objects of desires enter but cannot make any impressions attains to Peace ; but not he who desires to have objects of senses. The man who moves about abandoning all desires, and being unattached to any thing and free from all attachment and egoism, attains to Peace. This is, O Arjuna, *living in God*.‡ Attaining this state, none remains in delusion of this world. Remaining in this state at the time of death, one attains to *Brahma-Nirvana*."§

* *Muni* means a self-controlled man of devotion. *Muni* and *Rishi* are almost synonyms.

† This *sloka* is rather difficult to be understood. It has been variously explained. We believe it means, that in which the people find pleasures and attachment is nothing to a man of devotion. And again that in which they see nothing is that in which he finds everything.

‡ The word is *Bramhasthithi*,—"staying in Bramha."

§ *Nirvana* literally means "extinction." *Bramha-Nirvana* would mean "extinction in Bramha." The word "Nirvana" is one of the most important in the Budhistic doctrines. There also it means total extinction of the mind and soul. The difference between the Budhistic "Nirvana" and the Hindu "Bramha-Nirvana" is that the Buddhists say it is possible for a man to extinguish the fire that is in him, namely his mind and soul. The Hindus say it is possible to bring into extinction the mind and soul of a man by mixing it up with the Great Soul. The Budhistic *Nirvana* is a man without a soul ; the Hindu *Bramha-Nirvana* is a man with the Supreme Soul. In one, man becomes the Supreme God and in another, man becomes the Supreme Man. Both ideas are grand ; nothing could be grander.

The state of *Bramha-Nirvana* is more clearly defined by Krishna later on.

CHAPTER III.

KNOWLEDGE AND WORK.

"IF Knowledge,"* asked Arjuna, "O Krishna, is in

* Krishna thus explains "*Knowledge*" in the Gita, chap. XIII., slokas 1—18. "This body is called *Kheshttra*. The learned men call him who knows it *Kheshttrajna*. Know me (God) as *Kheshttrajna* in all *Kheshttras*. The knowledge of *Kheshttra* and *Kheshttrajna* is the true knowledge." It virtually means therefore, "Know thyself" and "Know God."

Krishna then continues,—“Hear from me in brief what is *Kheshttra*, what are its natures, what are its changes, what is its origin and what are its powers. All these have been sung by many Rishis in various ways and in various verses, in Bramha-knowing texts and in doubt-removing reasonings.”

“The element, egoism, understanding, primal Nature, ten senses, five objects of senses, one mind, desire, aversion, happiness, misery, body, consciousness, patience, all these in brief are *Kheshttras* with all their changes.”

“Purity, constancy, self-restraint, forgiveness, uprightness, absence of vanity, of ostentation and egoism, freedom from fear, independence of objects of senses, perception of misery and evil in birth, death, decrepitude and disease, freedom from attachments, absence of love for children, wife, home &c., constant equanimity of heart in both good and evil, unswerving devotion to me (God), non-meditation on any thing else (except God), frequenting lonely places and hatred for the concourse of men, the firm knowledge of the relation that exists between the great Self and the individual Self, perception of the objects of true knowledge,—all these are called “Knowledge.” All that is contrary to them is “Ignorance.”

“I shall now declare to you the “Object of Knowledge,” knowing which one obtains immortality. It is the great Bramha of no beginning. He is neither *sat* nor *asat*. It is the supreme Bramha whose hands and feet are on all sides, whose eyes, heads, faces, are on all sides, who hears on all sides and dwells pervading all in this world. He, being devoid of the senses, is possessed of all the qualities of the senses. He sustains all things, but has no attachment for anything. He has no attributes, but at the same time possesses all attributes. He is within all creatures immobile and mobile. He is not knowable as he is subtle. He is remote yet near. He, being undistributed in anything, remains as if distributed in

your opinion superior to Action,* why do you then

everything. He is the sustainer of all beings, he is the destroyer and the creator of all. He is the light of all luminous bodies, he is beyond all darkness ; he is knowledge, the object of knowledge and the end of knowledge. He is the high of all.

"Thus in brief *Keshtra*, Knowledge, and the Object of Knowledge are declared to you. Knowing all this, my friend, attain to *Yoga*."

* Thus does Krishna explain *Action*. The Gita, chap. XVIII., slokas 13—19, say :—"I shall declare to you the five causes for the completion of action, as told in the *Sankhya* which treats of the annihilation of actions. Substratum (body), agent (ego), organs (physical as eyes &c.), efforts (various to attain salvation) and the deity are the five causes of action. With body, mind or speech whatever works, good or bad, a man performs, these five are their causes. Such being the case, he, who, owing to his uncultivated understanding and dull mind, sees his own self as the sole agent of all actions, sees nothing. He who has no egoism, whose understanding is not attached to the fruits of actions does not kill, if he kills all these people. He is never under the fetter of actions."

"*Knowledge*, the *Object of knowledge*, and the *Known* are the three-fold *impulse* of action. *Instrument*, *action* and *agent* are the three-fold *compliment* of action. There are three sorts of *Knowledge*, *Action* and *Agent* according to the different qualities (*Satwa*, *Raja* and *Tama*)."

"*Satwa* knowledge is that which makes one see one Eternal Essence undivided in the divided. *Raja* knowledge makes one see various essences of different kinds in different things. *Tama* knowledge is that which makes one see various single objects, as if they are each as the whole. The knowledge which is without reason, without truth, and which is mean and low is the result of *Tama*."

"*Satwa* action is that which is performed without attachment, desire or aversion, or without the desire of obtaining any fruits from it. *Raja* action is that which is performed with great efforts by one who desires to obtain fruits from it and who is filled with egoism. *Tama* action is that which is performed from delusion without regard to its consequences, and to one's own loss and injury as well as that of others."

"*Satwa* agent is he who is free from attachment and egoism, who is full of constancy and energy, who remains unmoved both in success and in failure. *Raja* agent is he who is full of affections, who desires for the fruits of actions, who is covetous, cruel and impure, and who feels both pleasure and sorrow. *Tama* agent is he who is void of application, who is without discernment, who is obstinate, deceitful, malicious, idle, desponding, and procrastinating."

prompt me to this fearful action ?* You confound my mind by equivalent words.† Tell me definitely what is good for me."

"I have told you," replied Krishna, "there are two paths‡ in this world,—that of *Yoga of Knowledge* followed by the *Sankhyas*, and that of *Yoga of Action* followed by the *Yogees*. Man does not attain freedom from action by not performing actions. By renunciation of action none attains to salvation. None can ever remain without performing some action. Man must perform actions impelled by the laws of Nature.§ Restraining the organs of action, that deluded man who ponders over the objects of senses in his mind speaks but lies. But on the other hand, he who performs the *Yoga of Action* by works and acts restraining his senses by his mind is highly esteemed. Therefore always perform action, for action is better than inaction. Your body cannot be kept alive without performing actions.|| But

* It refers to the great battle.

† Praising "action" once and praising "knowledge" next.

‡ Two paths to obtain salvation.

§ Nature is *Prakriti*. This is what Krishna says about *Prakriti* & *Purusha*. The Gita, chap. XIII., slokas 19-23 say :—"Know that *Prakriti* & *Purusha* are both without beginnings. Know all modifications of matter and all its qualities spring from *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* is the source of the working of causes and effects. *Purusha* is the source of the capacity of enjoying pleasure and pains. *Purusha*, dwelling in *Prakriti*, enjoys the qualities that are born in her. The cause of good birth and bad birth of *Purusha* is its connection with these qualities. In this body *Purusha* is distinct, he is the surveyor, adviser, supporter and enjoyer ; he is the mighty Lord and Supreme Self."

|| The word is *Jajna*, which literally means sacrifice, a Vedic religious ceremony. Here the word means Vishnu or God. We follow Sanker Swami and other great commentators. What are the God's works,—is a question. The Gita explains it later on. We might say here "it is the duty to one's own self, to one's own society, country and others, and finally to God."

except God's works all works produce *Karmabandhana*.* Therefore, O Arjuna, perform actions without any desire to obtain their fruits.† The man who is attached to his own self, who is pleased with his own self and who is contented with his own self has no actions to perform. He has no concern in actions done or not done in this world. Nor has he any dependence on any being in the whole world. Therefore without any attachment, perform actions that *ought* to be performed.‡ The man who performs actions without attachment attains to the Supreme. Janaka§ and others attained to the Supreme by performing actions."

Karmabandhana—see our note in chap I., pg. 7.

† Then Krishna goes on to place before Arjuna a precedent. The Gita, chap III., slokas 10-16 say :—"In the time of yore Brahma created the creatures along with 'sacrifice' and said, 'Improve yourself with this. Let it produce all that you desire. Please the celestials and let the celestials please you. Thus pleasing each other, you will attain to the highest good. Being pleased with the sacrifice, the celestials will give you your desired enjoyments. Whoever enjoys the things given by the celestials without giving them first is a thief. The good men, who eat the remnants of sacrificial things, are freed from all sins. The bad men who cook only for themselves commit sin. Creatures are the outcome of food ; food is produced by rain. Rain is produced by sacrifice and the sacrifice is produced by action ; action is produced from Brahma ; Brahma is produced from the Imperishable. Therefore all-pervading Brahma is always established in the sacrifice. The sensual and sinful men, who do not conform to this revolving wheel, live in vain."

There are different explanations of the above ; but we believe the main object of Krishna's citing this instance is to show that this world cannot go on without action ; therefore none can live without performing some physical or mental actions.

‡ The word is *Karjan Karma*,—the works that *ought* to be done ; in brief one's *duties*.

§ Janaka was a great king of Videha. He was vastly learned as well as highly raised in the spiritual matters. It is said he attained to the Supreme. But like other Rishis who are said to have attained salvation, he did not retire to the deep forest. He performed all his Royal duties, and did all other necessary works as

"And again having regard to keeping the people attached to their own duties, you should perform actions. Whatever a great man does, so do the masses. What great men consider authorities, the masses follow.* The ignorant men act with attachment to the fruits of action; the learned men, however, in order to stick the ignorant men to their duties, should act just like them, but without attachment. A wise man should not confuse the minds of the ignorant men who are attached to actions. He should make them take to actions by himself acting without attachment."

"Every thing in every way is done by the laws of Nature.† Only he whose mind is deluded by egoism considers himself the doer of actions. The wise men, who know that Self is distinct from the qualities of Nature as well as from the actions in this world, feel no egoism, knowing that qualities deal with only qualities.‡ A man of perfect knowledge should not shake the beliefs of the men of imperfect knowledge, who, being deluded by the qualities of Nature, form attachment to the actions done by those qualities of Nature."

any other worldly man. Krishna means to say that by performing one's own duties, one can attain to the Supreme as this king did.

* Then Krishna goes on to speak of himself. The Gita, chap III, slokas 22-23 say, "There is, O Arjuna, nothing to do for me in the three worlds. I have nothing to acquire which I have not already acquired, but still I do perform actions &c. &c."

And again slokas 30-32 say, "Therefore dedicating all actions to me and knowing the mystery of Self, engage in battle &c. &c."

† We have translated *Guna of Prakriti* by "law of Nature." It means the qualities, *Satya*, *Raja* and *Tama*, the sources of all actions in Nature."

‡ This sloka refers to those that know that every thing is done by Nature,—who know that it is not they that act but only their senses and organs of actions that act;—these men are never filled with egoism, pride and vanity."

"Even a man of perfect knowledge acts according to his own nature. All beings follow Nature. What then the restraints of the organs of actions would avail?*" All senses have their likes and dislikes for respective fixed objects. But none should be under their control, for they are one's great enemies.† One's own *Dharma*,‡ even if imperfectly performed, is superior to the perfectly performed *Dharma* of others. Death is preferable in performing one's own *Dharma*, for the *Dharma* of others is dangerous.§

* It is a covert attack on the *Samnyasins* who renounce all actions and go to the jungle to obtain salvation. Krishna says such renunciation of all actions will not avail at all,—it will not give salvation to any man, for by doing this, no man can really renounce all actions. He may renounce all physical actions, but he will not be able to renounce all his mental actions.

† Opponents on one's way to the path of salvation.

‡ This word we have not translated here. We have repeatedly said, the word *Dharma* has various significations; it means "religion,"—it means "nature," it means "duty," it means "virtue," and so forth. Here the word is *Swa-Dharma*, i. e. one's own duties, enjoined by Nature.

§ In chapter XVIII., the Gita, slokas 45—48 say :—"Every man, if he performs his own duties, obtains salvation. Hear how man attains to perfection by performing his own duties. Worshipping Him from whom are the exertions of beings and by whom all the universe is pervaded, man is seen to attain to perfection with the performance of his own duties. Better is one's own duty, though imperfectly performed, than another's duty well-performed. Man incurs no sin by performing actions prescribed by Nature. Man must not abandon actions prescribed by Nature, however bad they might be, for all actions are enveloped in errors as fire by smoke.

CHAPTER IV.

VIRTUE AND SIN.

"THEN, O Krishna," asked Arjuna, "by whom impelled does man commit sin, though unwilling, as if driven by some force?"

"It is Desire;" replied Krishna, "it is Wrath,* born of the *Raja* quality in Nature. It is greatly ravenous; it is greatly sinful. Know it to be a great enemy in this world.† As fire is enveloped by smoke, a mirror by dust, the fetus by the womb, so knowledge‡ is enveloped by it. Knowledge is always enveloped by this insatiable fire, Desire, which is the constant enemy of a man of knowledge."§

* Wrath is the result of desire. When desire is in any way checked, then wrath is produced. Krishna says in the Gita, chap. II., slokas 62-63. "Pondering over worldly matters produces desire; desire produces wrath; wrath produces want of discrimination or delusion; delusion produces confusion of memory; confusion of memory produces loss of reason; loss of reason produces final destruction."

† Enemy in the path of happiness in this world and of final salvation in the next.

‡ Knowledge in all these places means the true knowledge, as explained by Krishna in the Gita, chap. XIII., slokas 1-18. See pp. 14-15.

§ In the Gita, chap. XVI. Krishna says:—"There are two kinds of beings in this world, namely "God-like" and "Demoniac." Let me first describe the God-like."

"Fearlessness, purity of heart, perseverance, Yoga of Knowledge, Gifts, self-restraint, Sacrifices, Study of Self, meditation, uprightness, non-doing of injury, truth, freedom from anger, abandonment of the desire for the fruits of actions, peace, freedom from fault-finding, compassion for all, absence of covetousness, gentle-

"It is said that its seat is in the senses, in the mind, and in the understanding of a man. By the help of these three, (senses, mind and understanding) it deludes man by enveloping his knowledge. Therefore, O Arjuna, bring your senses under control and conquer this embodiment of sin (desire) which destroys both *Jnana* and *Bijnana*.* It is said, great are the senses; greater than the senses is the mind; greater than the mind is understanding. He who is greater than the understanding,

ness, modesty, absence of restlessness, vigour, forgiveness, firmness, cleanliness, absence of quarrelsomeness, freedom from vanity,—all these belong to a God-like man."

"Now hear about the demoniac men. The demoniac men know not what is *Prabritti* and what is *Nibritti*. (It is very difficult to translate these two words. In brief they mean "mental actions" and "suspension of mental actions.") Neither purity, nor good conduct, nor truth exists in them. They say that this universe is false; it has no guiding principle, nor has it a God. It has been produced by the union of one another,—the result of lust. These men of lost self and little intelligence and of fearful deeds, believing and depending on this and becoming the enemies of the world, are born for the destruction of the universe. Being indued with hypocrisy, conceit and folly and cherishing insatiable desires, they believe in false things and perform all sinful acts. Cherishing boundless thoughts,—thoughts, which are limited by death only,—and considering the employment of their desires as the highest aim of life, being bound in hundred nooses of hope and addicted to lust and wrath, they eagerly desire to possess unfairly the hoards of wealth, so that with them they may gratify their desires. 'This is obtained to-day by me,' 'I possess this wealth,' 'all this wealth will be mine in addition to what I possess,' 'This enemy has been killed by me,' 'I shall kill other enemies also,' 'I am the lord,' 'I am the enjoyer,' 'I am successful,' 'I am powerful and happy,' 'I am wealthy,' 'I am nobly born,' 'Who is there in the world as I am,' 'I shall perform sacrifices,' 'I shall make gifts,' 'I shall be merry,'—thus say all demoniac men deluded as they are by ignorance. Tossed about by innumerable thoughts, enveloped by delusion, and attached to the enjoyment of desires, these men gradually sink into the lowest hell."

* The word *Jnana* we have translated by "knowledge." *Bijnana* means "knowledge in particular." The modern meaning of *Bijnana* is "Science." But we believe the author of the Gita does not mean "Science" by *Bijnana*. Most likely he means the special knowledge of Brahma's unknowable Self (God). Some

namely the *Purusha*, is the great Self. Thus knowing *Him* greater than the understanding and making one's own Self firm (in God) by his own Self, conquer this unconquerable enemy, Desire.

commentators say *Jnana* is the knowledge of God's manifested *Universal* Nature and *Bijnana* is the knowledge of God's manifested *Spiritual* Nature.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT DECLARATION.

"I TOLD this imperishable *Yoga*," continued Krishna, "to Vivaswata. He declared it to Manu ; Manu declared it to Ikshaku. * Thus coming down from generation to generation, it became known to the royal sages, † But this *Yoga* ‡ was lost to the world by long lapse of time; you are my devotee and friend, therefore I have told you this old *Yoga*, for this mysterious knowledge is highly good." §

"Later is your birth," said Arjuna, "prior is the birth of Vivaswata ; how shall I know then that you declared it first, ?"

"Many births," replied Krishna, "of yours and mine have taken place. I know them all, O Arjuna, but you do not know them. Though I have no birth, though I

* These are celebrated kings of ancient India. They are all known as men who attained to the Supreme by their great learning and piety.

† There were two classes of sages in ancient India, namely *Rajarshis* and *Brahmarshis*. The *Rajarshis* were kings who were great in learning, knowledge and piety, and *Brahmarshis* were those that retired into the forest to attain to Brahma and thus became great in knowledge and piety. We have translated *Rajarshis* by "royal sages."

‡ *Yoga* here means the great mysterious knowledge by which a man can attain to the Supreme.

§ This mysterious knowledge is extremely good and beneficial to man, because it points out to him the path of salvation.

am imperishable, though I am the lord of all creatures, yet resting on *Prakriti*,* I take birth out of my *Maya*.†

"Whensoever virtue languishes and sin predominates, I create myself. I take birth age after age‡ for the protection of the good and for the destruction of the bad and for the establishment of True Religion.§ He who truly knows my these wonderful births and deeds|| casts off his body and is not born again. He obtains me (God). Many holy sages,¶ who were free from attachment, fear and wrath, who were full of me, and who were dependent on

* Resting on *Prakriti* means "joining with Nature." See our note pg. 16.

† It is very difficult to give the exact signification of the word *Maya*. It has been variously translated by the words "delusion" "illusion" &c. It is the mysterious result of the great *Purusha's*, —unknowable Supreme One's—resting on *Prakriti*. It is the mysterious "Illusion" that comes over the great Self when it remains in the human body. This mysterious power of the Supreme One makes a man believe that he is not the Supreme One, but quite a different and insignificant being, living in a vast universe, though really he is none other than the great unknowable One existing in an unknowable state. This mysterious *Maya* can only be destroyed by "true knowledge."

‡ Almost these very words were said by Jesus in St Mathew, chap XXIV., 7-27.

§ Though Krishna has been described as the Supreme Lord by all the Puranas, by the Harivansa and Mahavarata, we have pointed out that except in the Gita, he himself never gave out that he was the Supreme One. On the contrary he more than once said that he was but a man. See vol I. pg.45. In the Gita he not only declared himself as the Supreme One, but manifested himself in his Great Form before Arjuna. See our note later on, *anent* Krishna's manifestation of his Supreme Form.

|| "The words are *Janma* and *Karma*. Here it means "his incarnation in this world as the Vrishni prince Krishna and his career from his birth in Mathurah to his death in Pravasha."

¶ We have translated the word. *Jnanatapasa* as "holy sages." It literally means, "Those that meditate on Brahma by knowledge."

me, attained to my essence.* I bestow my favours in different ways in which different men worship me. Men in every way follow my path.† With the desire of obtaining success in their works, men worship the celestials in this world, for success in action is easily obtained in this world of men. I have created the four castes according to different qualities and actions‡ in different men. Though I am their Creator, yet know me as being Non-creator and Imperishable. Actions do not touch me ; I have no attachment in the fruits of actions. He who knows me as such is not tied down by actions. Knowing this, men, desirous of emancipation, thus did perform actions in the days of yore. Therefore you too perform actions, as was done by men of old in the olden times."

"Even men of true knowledge are confused about what is action and what is inaction.§ I shall speak to you about that action learning which you will be freed from the evils. There are things to know in "actions ;" there

* The word "*Bhāva*" has various significations. We have used the word "essence" here.

† He means that "men, whatever be the modes of their worship, worship God ; *i. e.* a Heathen, a Christian, a Buddhist, a Hindu, though their modes of worship are different, all worship the same Supreme One and follow in the path of God."

He further says that God bestows different favours on different men as they worship Him in different ways,—*i. e.*, He bestows wealth on some, fame on others, knowledge on some, different sorts of births in different sorts of men,—different states of happiness and misery after death, and so forth.

‡ He means God has created different sorts of men according to the fruits of actions performed in their previous births and also according to the different qualities, (*Satwa, Raja* and *Tama*) that are in different men.

§ "Actions" are those that *ought* to be performed in this world. "Inactions" means "renunciation of action." "Forbidden actions" are those that *ought* not to be performed. All this has been clearly defined by Krishna in the Gita. (See next chapter).

are things also to know in "inactions;" there are also things to know in "forbidden actions." The nature of actions is abstruse.*

"He who sees 'inaction' in 'action' and 'action' in 'inaction' is wise among men. Though a doer of all actions, he is still a *Yogee*. The learned men call him wise whose all actions are free from desires and will, and whose actions are burnt down by the fire of knowledge. Being free from attachment of the fruits of actions, being always contented and depending on none, although such men engage in actions, they really do nothing at all. Being devoid of desires, having the mind and the soul under control, and casting off all worldly concerns, he who performs actions† only for the preservation of his body incurs no sin. Being contented with what is spontaneously got, being beyond the influences of the pairs of opposites, being free from all jealousies, and being equable in both success and failure, such a man, although he performs actions, is not tied down by actions. The actions, performed in *Yoga*‡ by a man who is

* See our Note in pg. 15.

† The word is *Jānaya-charata*, literally "performed in *Yoga*." Krishna repeatedly says that "actions *must* be performed in this world and renunciation of all actions is neither good nor possible. Therefore those actions that *ought* to be performed *must* be performed, but all these actions *must be performed in Yoga*, the state which he explains all through the Gita." In the two chapters following our readers will find what *Yoga* and a *Yogee* really are. Both have been clearly explained.

‡ Mentioning that actions should be performed in *Yoga*, Krishna goes on to speak of all the various sorts of *Yogas* i.e. sacrifices and rites, that were then practised by the Aryans, though his meaning of *Yoga* was quite different from them. Our readers will find, he says that knowledge is the best of all sacrifices i.e. *Yogas*. It is better that we should quote the passage here. The *Gita*, chap. IV., slokas 24-32 say :—

"Brahma is the vessel of libation, Brahma is the libation itself,

devoid of attachments, who is free from passions, and whose mind is steady in knowledge, are all destroyed."*

"The *Yoga* of Knowledge, O Arjuna, is superior to all the *Yogas* performed with the desire to gain possessions (either in this world or in the next), for all actions are wholly and fully completed in knowledge. Therefore obtain knowledge by reverentially saluting the learned, by asking them questions and by doing service to them. The men of knowledge and the men that know Truth will teach you knowledge. Having obtained such knowledge, you will not again fall into delusion. By means of it, you will see all beings in yourself first and then in me (God)."

"If you be the greatest sinner amongst all sinful men, you will still cross over the ocean of sin by means of the boat of knowledge. As the blazing fire reduces all woods to ashes, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes. There is nothing in this world which is so much purifying as knowledge. The man who has attained to *Yoga* (of action) obtains it in time. The man, having reverence and faith,—and the man of

Brahma is the fire, Brahma is the pourer of libation,—to him who thus meditates upon Brahma in all his actions, Brahma is the goal to which he proceeds. Some *Yogees* perform the 'sacrifice' to the celestials, others offer up sacrifices to Brahma-Fire. Others offer up in the fire of self-restraint all his senses, such as the senses of hearing &c. Others again offer up the objects of senses, such as sound &c, into the fire of senses; others offer up all the actions of the senses and those of the life-breaths into the *Yoga*-fire of self-restraint kindled by knowledge. Some perform sacrifices for gaining possessions, some the sacrifice of penance, others again the sacrifice of concentration of mind " and so forth.

Krishna thus concludes,—“ Thus sacrifices of various sorts are mentioned in the Vedas. Know them all as the results of actions. Knowing this, you will be freed from the fetters of the world. ”

* The word is *Atmabanta*,—a man in Peace. (See note pg. 12.

self-restraint,—obtains knowledge. Obtaining knowledge, he soon gains the highest Peace. He, who is ignorant, who has no reverence and faith, and who is full of misgivings and doubt, is lost. The man whose mind is full of doubts has for him neither this world, nor the next, nor any happiness."

"Actions do not fetter him who is self-possessed, whose doubts have been all removed by knowledge and who has placed all his actions in *Yoga*.* Therefore destroying with the sword of knowledge these misgivings of yours, which are but the result of ignorance, engage in *Yoga*."†

* Our readers must have by this time found out what connection Krishna lays down between *Jnana* and *Karma*, i.e. the *Yoga* of Knowledge and the *Yoga* of Action. The general belief is that in order to gain true knowledge i.e. knowledge of the Supreme, one is to renounce all actions whatsoever. Krishna says nothing could be more erroneous. He gives preference to the performance of actions over every other things. In the next two chapters he explains it more fully.

† That is,—Arise and fight without the least desire for any result.

CHAPTER VI.



THE YOGH OF ACTION.

"O KRISHNA," said Arjuna, "you advise me to adopt *Karma Sannyasa* ; you then again advise me to adopt *Yoga* ;* tell me truly which of the two is superior ?"

"Both renunciation of action," replied Krishna, "and pursuit of action are means to obtain emancipation. But of these two, the pursuit of action is better than the renunciation of action.† Know him to be always a

* The words are *Sannyasa* and *Karma Yoga* ; we translate the first by "renunciation of action" and the second by "pursuit of action." We have already said, it was the custom of the ancient Aryans, nay of some of the modern Hindus, to renounce all worldly actions and to retire into a forest in order to acquire knowledge and to meditate on Brahma. It was the general belief that "knowledge" could not be acquired without renouncing all worldly actions. Such "renunciation of action" is called *Sannyasa*. But we find Krishna gives preference to the "pursuit of worldly actions" over the "renunciation of worldly actions," which is known by the name of *Sannyasa*.

† In the Gita, chapter XVIII, slokas 2—11, Krishna further explains this matter. He there mentions *Sannyasa* and *Tyaga* and points out their difference. He goes on to say :—"Rejection of all works with some particular desire is known by the learned as *Sannyasa*. But the abandonment of the desire for the fruits of all actions is called *Tyaga* by the discerning men. Some wisemen say that work itself should be abandoned considering it to be an evil. They say *Jajna* (Sacrifices), *Dana* (Gifts) and *Tapa* (meditation) should not be abandoned. Listen to my opinion about *Tyaga*. *Tyaga* is of three kinds. Sacrifices, Gifts and meditation should not be renounced ; they are the means of purifying the wise men. But even these works should be performed without attachment and without the desire to obtain any fruits. This is my firm good opinion. The works that *ought* to be performed should not be abandoned. Such abandonment is the result of delusion, and arises from *Tama*. When work is abandoned from bodily fear

Sannyasi, (though he performs works), who has no aversion and no desire. He who is free from the pairs of opposites* is easily released from the fetters of the world.† Ignorant men and not learned men say that *Sankhya*‡ and *Yoga* are distinct. He who practises one enjoys the fruits of both. The place that the followers of *Sankhya* obtains is also obtained by the followers of *Yoga*. He sees truly who sees the *Sankhya* and *Yoga* as one and the same, O Arjuna, it is difficult to attain to *Sannyasa* without *Yoga*.§ The sages, possessed of *Yoga*, soon attain to Bramha." 3987

"He, who is possessed of *Yoga*,|| whose mind is pure, who is self-restraint, who has controlled his senses, who

and from the consideration of pain, such abandonment is the result of *Raja*, and one who makes such abandonment never obtains the fruits of *Tyaga*. The abandonment of attachment and of the fruits of actions which are performed, because they *ought* to be performed, is the result of *Satwa*. He is a real *Tyagee*, who, being indued with intelligence, and freed from all doubts and misgivings, has no aversion for an unpleasant action and has no attachment for pleasant ones. Actions can by no means be absolutely abandoned by man; therefore he who abandons the fruits of actions, (but performs actions that *ought to be performed*) is a true *Tyagee*."

* One who is beyond the influences of cold and heat, pain and pleasure &c.

† It means the rebirths, i.e. that which causes men to take births again.

‡ Krishna has explained *Sankhya* and *Yoga* fully later on. We use in the text the original words, for their English equivalents are rather long. The followers of *Sankhya* are the *Sannyasis* who have renounced all worldly actions to obtain "knowledge." The followers of *Yoga* are the *Tyagees* who have abandoned all desires to obtain the fruits of all worldly actions, but who perform them considering that they are "duties."

§ Krishna says that even renunciation of actions i.e. *Sannyasa*, is not possible without performing some actions. It is *absolutely impossible* for man to abandon and to renounce all actions.

|| We shall often use the word *Yoga* in original. Our readers must always understand by this word "performing all worldly actions that *ought* to be performed without any attachment to them and without any desire whatsoever to obtain any fruits from them."

sees his own self in all beings, is not fettered by performing actions. The man of *Yoga* who has understood the Truth thinks 'I do nothing myself.' When he sees, hears, touches, smells, eats, moves, sleeps, breathes, talks, throws out excretions, opens and closes his eyes, he thinks that his senses merely deal with the objects of senses."

"Abandoning all attachments, he who performs actions dedicating them to Brahma,† is not touched by sin, as the lotus leaves are never wetted by water. For the purpose of purifying one's self, the *Yogee* performs actions with his body, mind, the understanding, even with his senses, being freed from all attachments. The *Yogees*, abandoning the desire for the fruits of actions, attain to the highest Peace. The *Non-Yogees*, being attached to the fruits of actions, are always tied down to rebirths on account of their desire. The man, who is self-controlled, renouncing all actions in his mind, lives at ease within the city of nine gates."‡

"The Lord does neither create the capacity of actions in man, nor the cause of actions, nor the connection of actions with their fruits. Nature only works. The Lord receives no one's sins, nor the virtues of any. Knowledge is enveloped by ignorance, therefore all creatures are deluded.§ To them whose 'ignorance' is destroyed by

* That is,—his body only works, his mind being absolutely untouched by these actions. His physical senses merely come into contact with the various objects of senses in the world,—his mind having absolutely nothing to do with them.

† The Supreme one, the great God.

‡ The phrase means "human body,"—nine gates being nine physical senses.

§ Out of delusion, i. e. for the want of true knowledge, they consider that they themselves act, whereas they really do nothing; Nature only works.

'knowledge,' the Self appears through that 'knowledge' like the blazing sun. Those whose mind is fully in Him, whose self is in Him, who is devoted to Him, whose goal is He, such men, their sins having been destroyed, go to Him never to return."

"A man of true knowledge looks on a Brahman Indued with learning and humility, and also on a cow, an elephant, a dog, or a *Chandala** as all alike."

"Even here in this life the world is conquered by one whose mind rests on equanimity.† He is as faultless‡ as Brahma, therefore he lives in Brahma.§ The man, whose understanding is firm (in God), who lives in Brahma and who is not deluded, does not exult on obtaining anything agreeable, nor does grieve for getting any thing disagreeable. One whose Self is not attached to any external objects obtains the happiness that is in one's own Self.|| Having his Self united by *Yoga* with Brahma, one obtains the happiness that is imperishable. The pleasures, derived in the world from the objects of senses, are the sources of misery, and they have a beginning as well as an end. Therefore, O Arjuna, a man of knowledge, does not find any pleasures in them. He who is able to withstand the forces of wrath and

* A *Chandala* is a man of the lowest of the Hindu castes,—even the touch of his shadow is often considered contamination by the members of the higher castes.

We would ask our foreign readers to mark the above grand catholicism of Srikrishna's teachings,—every line of which is a gem in itself.

† The word is *Samyasthitha*. (See pp. 10-11).

‡ It means "perfect."

§ The word is *Bramhasthitha*. This word is equivalent to *Brahma-Nirvana*, a word which often occurs in this chapter. (See our note on *Brahma-Nirvana* in page 12).

|| See our note on *Prasada* in page 12.

desire in this world before the dissolution of his body is a *Yogee* ; he is really happy. *"

"The *Yogee*, whose happiness is within himself, whose recreations are within himself and whose light is within himself, lives in *Brahma*, and thus obtains *Brahma-Nirvana*. † That sage obtains *Brahma-Nirvana* whose sins are destroyed, whose misgivings are removed, who is self-restraint and who is engaged in doing good to all creatures. *Brahma-Nirvana* here in this life while living, and *Brahma-Nirvana* also in after-life when dead are obtained by those *Yogees* who are free from wrath and desire, whose minds are under control and who have obtained the knowledge of Self."

* A dead body does not and cannot feel any desire nor any wrath ; so a man who goes beyond the influence of wrath and desire like a dead body, even when he is alive, is called a *Yogee*.

† Krishna says that a man can attain to *Brahma* not only when he departs from this life, but it is also possible for him to do it even when he is alive in his this body. He then cites an example of men who attain to *Brahma* (i.e. obtain *Brahma-Nirvana*) in this life. Slokas 27-28, chapter X., the Gita, say :—"The sage who is always intent on emancipation, who has restrained his senses, mind and understanding, who is freed from desire, wrath and fear, who has excluded from his mind all external objects of senses and has directed his sight between the eye-brows, who has mingled into one the upward and the downward life-breaths and made them pass through the nostril, is always emancipated (i. e. has obtained *Brahma-Nirvana* even in this life.)"

We need not tell our readers that above is the description of a stern *Sannyasi*, which, Krishna has said, is very difficult to be. Therefore in the next sloka 29, chapter V. he adds :—"He, who knows me as the enjoyer of all sacrifices and penances, the great Lord of all the worlds and the friend of all creatures, obtains Peace. A man of faith and devotion also obtains *Brahma-Nirvana* in this life."

Buddha is said to have obtained *Nirvana* in this life. The words *Brahma-Nirvana* and *Nirvana* were long known in India before the birth of Buddha.

CHAPTER VII.

THE YOGEE OF DEVOTION.

"HE who performs actions,"* continued Krishna, "that ought to be performed, regardless of their fruits, is

* We now come to the 6th chapter of the Gita. We must here mention that the Gita contains eighteen chapters, each chapter having a distinct appellation, but each of these appellations has been called *Yoga*. The first chapter is *Arjuna Bishada Yoga*, i. e. the *Yoga* of Arjuna's grief. This has been narrated in the last chapter of the Vol II of this work.

Our Vol III begins from the middle of the chapter II which is known by the name of *Sankhya Yoga*. We have already explained *Sankhya*. The third chapter is called *Karma-Yoga*, i. e. the *Yoga* of Action. The fourth is *Jnana-Yoga* i. e. the *Yoga* of Knowledge. The fifth is *Karma Sannyasa-Yoga* i. e. the *Yoga* of renunciation of action.

The sixth chapter which we now enter upon is called *Avyasa Yoga* i. e. the *Yoga* of Practice. To make these grand teachings of the Gita as lucid as possible, we have not followed its divisions and subdivisions, but made our own. We have divided it in various chapters and given them our own names. We hope our arrangements and headings will be a great help to our readers to understand the Gita.

Though each chapter of the Gita is known by a particular name, yet it contains many things more than what its name signifies. For example, though the sixth chapter is called *Avyasa Yoga*, yet it contains rather more of other matters than any teachings on "practice." Its first portion deals with a *Yogee* of action, the middle portion with a *Yogee* of knowledge,—then follow only a few words on practice,—the last portion dealing with a man of devotion.

The chapters 7th to 10th might very well be divided into three distinct parts, namely, (1) The nature of God, (2) His emanations, (3) His worship. These four chapters are respectively called (a) *Jnana Bijñana Yoga*, i. e. the *Yoga* of knowledge and special knowledge (6) *Akshara Brahma Yoga* i. e. the *Yoga* of imperishable Brahma, (b) *Rajvidya Rajguhya Yoga* i. e. the *Yoga* of the king of mystery and knowledge, (d) *Bhakti Yoga* i. e. the *Yoga* of great emanations.

a *Sannyasi* and a *Yogee*,* and not he who discards sacrificial fire† and abstains from all actions. O Arjuna, know what is called *Sannyasa* is also called *Yoga*. He who has not abandoned the desire to obtain the fruits of actions can never be a *Yogee*. To the sage who desires to rise to *Yoga*, action is said to be the means. When he has risen to *Yoga*, *Shama* is said to be the means.‡ The *Sannyasi* who is no longer attached to the objects of sense, nor to actions, who has renounced all his resolves and desires is said to have attained to *Yoga*. One should elevate his self by self; one should not lower his self. A man's self is his friend and his own self is also his enemy. He who has subjugated his self has made his self his friend; but he who has not subjugated his self has made his self his enemy. He who has controlled his self and has become free from passions has his self unmoved in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour. He has truly attained to *Yoga* whose self is content with knowledge and special knowledge, who is unmoved in

The chapter 11th is *Bishwarupa Darsana Yoga*. i. e. the *Yoga* of manifesting the Universal Form. We might say the Gita ends with the 11th chapter,—the remaining seven chapters are but explanatory of the preceding eleven chapters. Our readers will find that we have quoted almost every line of these seven chapters in our foot-notes explanatory of the first eleven chapters. However these seven chapters are respectively called (1) *Bhakti Yoga*, (2) *Khetra Khetrajna Yoga*, (3) *Gunatraya Bivaga Yoga* (4) *Purshattama Yoga* (5) *Daivasurasampadvivaga Yoga* (6) *Sradhyatruya Bivaga Yoga* and (7) *Moksha Yoga*.

* A *Sannyasi* is one who has renounced all worldly actions. A *Yogee* is one who performs all worldly actions, but has abandoned the desire to obtain their fruits.

† Perhaps our readers will not have to be told that every Aryan house-holder in ancient India used to keep a fire permanently burning in his house. This fire was daily being worshipped by him. To discard this fire meant the breaking up of one's household, retiring into a forest and renouncing all works.

‡ The word *Shama* is equivalent to *Samadhi*. It means that

everything, who has conquered his senses and to whom clay, stone and gold are all alike. That *Yogee* is distin-

state in which a man's all physical actions cease, and his mind remains fully and completely concentrated in Brahma. In this very chapter later on in slokas 10—28, Krishna points out what *Samadhi* is and how it is acquired. We quote the passage in full.

"A *Yogee*, remaining in solitude, restraining his Self and mind, having no desire and no concern, should engage in contemplation. Fixing his seat firmly on a pure spot, not too high and not too low, spreading over it a piece of cloth, deer-skin or *Kusa* grass,—there seated on that seat with his mind fixed on one point,—restraining his mind and senses, one should practise *Yoga* for the purification of his Self. Holding body, head and neck even, unmoved and steady, and fixing his eyes on the tip of his own nose,—without looking about in any direction,—with his self in tranquility, freed from fear, adhering to the practices of ascetics, he should restrain his mind, fix his heart on Me (God) and sit down regarding me as his final goal. Thus constantly devoting his Self to abstraction and contemplation, the *Yogee* whose mind is restrained attains that peace which culminates in final absorption and assimilation with me. *Yoga* is not achieved by the man who eats too much or eats nothing, who sleeps too much or is always awake. The *Yoga* of that man destroys misery who is temperate in food and amusements, who toils duly in all his works, and who is moderate both in sleep and vigil."

"When one's mind, having been well restrained, becomes confined in one's own self, then that man, being indifferent to all objects of desire, is called a *Yogee*. In an airless place, a light flickers not,—this has been cited as a simile of a *Yogee* whose mind has been restrained and who devotes himself to abstraction. That state in which mind being restrained ceases to work, in which one, seeing the self by self, becomes pleased in self, in which one experiences that infinite felicity which is beyond the sphere of the senses, and which only the understanding can grasp, adhering to which one never swerves from the truth, acquiring which one considers no other consideration higher than it, adhering to which one is not moved in the greatest misery,—such state should be understood to be called *Yoga*. In it there is a complete severance of all connections with pain."

"Such *Yoga* should be practised with steadiness and with an undepositing heart. Abandoning without exception all desires that are produced from resolves, and restraining by mind the entire group of senses, one should by slow degrees cease to think the objects of senses with the help of his understanding. The restless and unsteady mind always wants to stray away, but one should always restrain it and fix it steadily on the Self alone. To such a *Yogee* whose mind is in peace, whose passions have been suppress-

guished* who considers alike his well-wishers, friends, and enemies, those that are indifferent, and those that look to the good of both parties,—namely those that are objects of hatred and those that are wicked. The *Yogee* looks to every thing with equal eyes. He sees his own self in every creature and every creature in his own self."

"He who sees me in every thing and everything in me never loses sight of me, and I too never loses sight of him. That *Yogee* who worships me considering that I live in all creatures and that all is but One, lives in me, though he performs all worldly actions. That *Yogee*, who looks to all creatures as if they are his own self, and their pain and pleasures as his own, is considered to be the best."†

"I cannot see," said Arjuna, "how this *Yoga* based on equanimity,‡ which you have told me, can have a continual existence on account of the restlessness of the mind. Mind is fickle, boisterous, perverse and obstinate,

ed, who has become one with Brahma and who has become free from sins, highest felicity comes by itself."

We have not put the above in the text, because, as our readers will find, Krishna gives preference to "Yoga of performing worldly duties" over this "Yoga of concentration of mind."

* The words are *Jnana* and *Bijnana*,—see our note in page 21.

† Our readers now find that Krishna prefers a man who performs his duties to a man who sits deep in concentration of mind. But he puts down some very hard conditions in man's performing his duties. We believe our readers will not be required to be told what they are. A man must perform all his worldly duties, but without any attachment, desire, wrath or fear, or any passions whatsoever. He must abandon every desire to obtain any fruits or results from the actions performed by him. He must took to every thing with an equal eye, and so forth. This is not an easy matter; our readers will find exactly the same thing occurred to Arjuna. He asked Krishna how this can be achieved, and Krishna told him the means.

‡ See our note in page 10.

and I think it is as difficult to restrain it as the wind."

"The mind," replied Krishna, "is no doubt difficult to be restrained ; no doubt it is restless, but with constant practice and with the abandonment of desire,* it can be brought under control. It is my opinion that *Yoga* is difficult to be achieved by one who has not restrained his mind. But it can be achieved by proper expedients† with assiduousness by one who has controlled his mind."‡

"What is the end of him, O Krishna," asked Arjuna, "who is not a *Yogee*, whose mind has been shaken off from *Yoga*, and who has not earned success in *Yoga*,—though he is full of reverence and faith ? Deluded from the path to Brahma, being without support, and having fallen from both, would he go to ruin like a broken cloud ? You should entirely remove my these doubts. There is none else who can do it."

"Neither in this world," replied Ksishna, "nor in the next such a man is ruined. None who performs good

* The words are *Avyasa* and *Vairagya*.—*Avyasa* is "practice." If one continually tries and practises to control his mind, he can be successful in time. In addition to repeated attempts, he must also abandon all attachments and desires for all objects. *Vairagya* means complete want of attachment for any worldly object.

† The word is *Upayata*. It means "with expedients," "with diverse means" &c. The various commentators have mentioned various matters in connection with this word. Some say, these expedients are "sacrifices and other religious rites ;" others say, they refer to the various processes of *Yoga* (austerities) as declared by Patanjali, such as *Pranayama* &c. We believe "culture, education, mental discipline" &c. of the modern philosophers are as good expedients to bring the mind under control as any other.

‡ Whatever be the case there is no question that such *Yoga* is not easy to acquire. What would be the fate of those who would not be able to achieve it ? Our readers will find Arjuna ask the very question, and Krishna answers "God is for all."

deeds comes to an evil end.' He who has not been able to achieve *Yoga* goes to the region of men of pious deeds. He lives happily there for many years and is then born in the family of rich and virtuous men. He is born in the family of intelligent *Yogees*. Such births as these are difficult to get in this world.* Here in these births he comes in contact with the knowledge of Brahma which belonged to him in former births. He then makes greater attempts to achieve emancipation. Even though unwilling, he is led to work for emancipation on account of his devotional practices in his former births. Even one who is but an enquirer of *Yoga* goes beyond the Vedas.†

"By continuously working with assiduity, a *Yogee*, after all his sins being cleared off, obtains the final success and reaches the supreme goal after many births. A *Yogee* is superior to a *Tapaswi*; he is superior to a man of true knowledge; he is superior to a *Karmi*; therefore, O Arjuna, become a *Yogee*.‡ But even amongst all

* We need not tell our readers that "the doctrine of Rebirths" is one of the main features of the Hindu religion. In fact its whole structure stands upon it.

We find Krishna believed in rebirths. He repeatedly said man cannot but act impelled by Nature. These acts produce some results; the result of these results is rebirths.

Whether rebirths are possible is a question which we need not answer here. It is a big question, and this is not the place nor the time to enter into such a big controversy. If our readers take the trouble to *study* the Gita, we believe they will have no very great difficulty to find out whether rebirths are possible in human life or this birth is its first and its last.

† The Vedas promise heaven, wealth, powers &c. He who is an enquirer of *Yoga*,—not to speak of a *Yogee*,—gets much more than what the Vedas promise.

‡ The word *Tapaswi* has various significations. We believe here it means a man who is engaged in deep meditation of Brahma.

Yogees, he whose self is deep in me, he who worships me with faith and reverence, is in my opinion the highest *Yogee*.*

The word *Jnani* we have translated by "a man of true knowledge." *Karmi* literally means a "man who performs actions." We believe the word here means "a man who performs religious rites, sacrifices &c." Three classes of religious men there were in ancient India, namely (1) *Tapashwi* (a man who meditates on Brahma) (2) *Jnani* (a man of knowledge) and *Karmi* (a man of action." Krishna gives a higher place to a *Yogee* than he gives to any of these three. We need not say, he means by a *Yogee* "the man who performs his duties without attachment and without the least desire to obtain their fruits."

Our readers will find he gives the highest place a man of faith, love and devotion.

* In the 12th chapter, the Gita, which is called *Bhakti-Yoga*, Krishna explains what he means by the above *sloka*. There he explains whom he calls a man of faith, love and devotion. We shall quote the passage in full ; and we shall particularly ask our readers to read this passage, for in our humble opinion nothing could be grander.

The Gita, chapter XII., slokas 1—20 say :—

Arjuna said ;—"Of the two classes of your worshippers, those who adore you with love, devotion and faith, being always deep in you, and those who meditate on you as imperishable and unmanifest, who are the best *Yogees*?"

The great One said :—"He who is always deep in me, whose mind is firmly fixed on me and who always worships me with faith, devotion and love is, in my opinion, the highest *Yogee*. Those who, restraining the entire group of their senses, being equal-minded in respect of all things and performing good to all creatures, worship the Imperishable, the Unmanifest, the All-pervading, the Indifferent, the Immutable, the Eternal, also come to me. But greater is the difficulty to obtain me to those who seek for the Unmanifest ; for the way to the Unmanifest is hard to find by man. I become without delay the deliverer from the ocean of this world of those who repose all actions on me, who is deep in me, who worships me meditating on me with exclusive devotion and who has fixed his mind in me. Therefore fix your mind on me alone ; fix your understanding also in me. There is not the least doubt you will then after death live in me.

If, however, O Arjuna, you are unable to fix your mind on me, then try to attain to me by continual practice.

If you are unable to try to get me by continual practice, then

perform my works making it your highest aim. You will obtain final success by simply performing my works.

If you are unable to do even this, be then self-restrained ; abandon all desire to obtain fruits from actions, and have deep devotion in me.

Knowledge is superior to Practice ; Meditation is superior to Knowledge ; Abandonment of the desire to obtain fruits from action is superior to Meditation. Peace is the result of such abandonment.

He is dear to me, he is my devotee, who has no hatred for any thing, who is friendly and compassionate, who is free from egoism, who has no vanity, who is alike in pleasure and pain, who is forgiving, contented and always devoted, whose self is subdued, purpose is firm, and mind and understanding fixed on me. He is dear to me who is not troubled by the world, and the world is not troubled by him, and who is free from joy, fear and anxieties. He is dear to me, he is my devotee who is pure, diligent, unconcerned and free from all diseases and distress, and desireless of the fruits of actions. He is dear to me who has no joy and no aversion, who neither grieves nor desires, who renounces both good and evil, and who is full of faith and devotion. He is dear to me who is alike to friend and foe, in honour and dishonour, in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, and who is free from all attachments. He is dear to me who is taciturn, who is contented with any thing that comes to him, who is homeless, steady-minded, full of faith and to whom censure and praise are the same. Those that follow this religion of immortality which I declare to you,—those of my devotees who are full of faith and love and who considers *me* all, are the dearest to me."

CHAPTER VIII.



THE SUPREME ONE.

"HEAR, O Arujna," continued Krishna, "how you can know me by fixing your mind on me, by taking refuge in me and by practising *Yoga*.* I shall now exhaustively tell you the Knowledge with the Special Knowledge, knowing which there will remain nothing more for you to know in this world."

"One only among thousands of men tries to get final success.† Even among those that have achieved per-

* The chapters seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth deal with (1) The Nature of the Supreme one, (2) His Emanations and (3) His Worship. As we have already said, the first is called the "*Yoga* of Knowledge and Special Knowledge," the second "the *Yoga* of Imperishable Brahma," the third "the *Yoga* of the king of mystery and knowledge," and the fourth "the *Yoga* of great Emanations." The seventh chapter in fact contains all that has been elaborately dealt with in the three following chapters. The 8th, 9th, and 10th chapters might be called explanatory of the 7th. It first deals with the Nature of the Supreme One from 1—7 slokas. From 8—11 it speaks of the Supreme One's emanations, and from 12—28 it points out the way of worshipping the Great One. The almost whole of the eighth chapter speaks of the nature of the Great Brahma and how to attain to him. We have, therefore, put it as an explanatory foot-note of the first portion of the seventh chapter. The whole of the ninth chapter deals with the worship of the Supreme One. We have put it in continuation of that portion of the seventh chapter in which worship has been dealt with. The whole of the tenth chapter describes the great emanations of God. We have thought it better to give it in full in the text, putting as foot-note that portion of the seventh chapter which deals with emanations.

† The word *Siddha* we translate by "Final Success." It means "the success in obtaining final emancipation and in attaining to Brahma."

fection with assiduousness, a very few only know me truly."

"Earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, understanding and consciousness :—thus my Nature is divided eightfold. But this is a lower form of my Nature. Know there is another form of my Nature higher than this, which is animate,* and by which the universe is upheld. Know all creatures have arisen from my these two Natures. I am the productive cause and the destructive agent of all the universe.† There is nothing higher than myself. All this is woven in me like a row of pearls in a string."‡

"The whole universe is pervaded by me in my unmanifest form.§ All things rest in me, but I do not rest in them. And again all things are not in me. Look at my divine power.|| I support all entities, and I am the protector of all entities. As the great and all-occupying air always lives in the sky (without having any touch with it), so similarly do all entities live in me. All creatures attain to my Nature at the end of a *Kalpa*,¶ and again at the beginning of a *Kalpa*, I bring them forth. Resting on my own Nature, I again and again bring forth this whole assemblage of entities who are bound to perform actions impelled by Nature. But these acts of mine do not fetter me. I sit unconcerned and un-

* The word is *Jibavutan* = Being in life.

† In chapter ninth Krishna manifests to Arjuna his fearful appearance as the *Kala*, the destructive agent of the universe.

‡ We would specially ask our readers to mark this most beautiful simile.

§ This portion is quoted from the 9th chapter, slokas 4—10.

|| The word is *Yogamaishwaram* = The wealth of Yoga.

¶ *Kalpa* is a space of time during which this universe exists in its manifest form and at the end of which it disappears into the unknowable Supreme One.

attached to these actions. Under my supreme control, Nature gives birth to all moveables and immoveables. Thus does the universe revolve."*

"Know all existing things of *Satwa*, *Raja* and *Tama* are from me,† but I am not in them. All the universe is deluded by these three qualities. Therefore the creatures know me not who am beyond them and undecaying. This supernatural‡ Illusion of mine,§ the result of the three qualities, is difficult to transcend. Those that obtain me can transcend it. The doers of evils, the ignorant men, the worst of men, those whose knowledge has been stolen by Illusion, and those that are demoniac, do not obtain me."||

"O Arjuna, listen again to my words relating to the great Self.¶ I tell them to you out of a wish for your welfare. You too will be delighted with them. The hosts of celestials and the great Rishis do not know my origin. I am the source of all celestials and the Rishis. He, who knows me to be unborn, free from delusion, without beginning, the Supreme Lord of all the world, is released from sins. Intelligence, knowledge, absence from delusion, forgiveness, truth, self-restraint, tranquility, pleasure, pain, birth, death, fear, security, harmlessness, equanimity of mind, contentment, meditation, gifts, fame and infamy,—all these attributes of beings arise from me alone. He who knows correctly these emanations and

* Here ends the quotation from the ninth chapter.

† This is a quotation from the chapter VII., slokas 12—15.

‡ The word *Daibi* we have translated by "supernatural." It means "celestial," "relating to the Devas i. e. God." &c.

§ *Maya*. See our note in page 24.

|| Here ends the quotation from the chapter VII.

¶ This is a quotation from the 10th chapter, slokas 1—10.

mystic powers of mine, undoubtedly attains to unswerving *Yoga*. The truly wise men, imbued with my nature, worship me believing that I am the origin of all and from me all things proceed. Such men, placing their mind on me, devoting their lives to me, instructing one another and speaking about me, are always contented and happy. To such men as are always in me and as adore me with faith and devotion I give the *Yoga* of Knowledge, by which they obtain me. Out of wish for their welfare I, remaining in their heart, destroy the darkness of ignorance with the lamp of knowledge.”*

* We shall here quote some portion of the 8th chapter. It deals with the nature of the Supreme One and how to attain to Him. We would ask our readers to read the whole in the Gita.

“He who, possessing concentration of mind in continuous meditation, thinks of the Supreme Divine Being with a mind not running to other objects goes to the Supreme Being. He who, possessed of reverence and faith for him, with a steady mind and power of devotion, properly concentrating the life-breaths between the brows, meditates on the ancient Seer, the ruler of all the minutest of the minute, the supporter of all, whose form is inconceivable, whose brilliance is that of the sun and who is beyond all darkness attains to that transcendent divine Being. I shall briefly tell you of Him whom the Veda-knowing men call imperishable, into whom the ascetics without desires enter, and to whom to reach men follow the path of *Brahmacharis*. He reaches the highest goal who casts off his body and departs, stopping all passages (his senses), confining his mind within himself, placing his life-breaths within the eye-brows, adhering to uninterrupted meditation, uttering the one syllable *Om* which is Brahma and meditating on me. To that *Yogee* I am easy of access who always meditates on me by withdrawing his mind from all other objects and who constantly practises abstraction. Those high-souled men who achieve the highest perfection attaining to me do not again take birth which is the abode of sorrow.” &c.

CHAPTER IX.



HIS WORSHIP.

"Four classes," continued Krishna, "of doers of good deeds worship me, namely (*a*) one who is in distress, (*b*) one who is a seeker after knowledge, (*c*) one who desires wealth, and (*d*) one who possesses knowledge.* Amongst these four classes of men, the man of knowledge, who is solely devoted to me and who always lives in me, is the best. I am exceedingly dear to a man of knowledge, and he is also very dear to me. All these four classes of men are great, and in my opinion a man of knowledge is like my own Self, for he, being fully devoted to me, rests on me who am the highest and the best goal. A man of knowledge reaches me after many births, considering that Vasudava† is all. But such high-souled men are exceedingly rare."

"Those whose knowledge is stolen by various desires, observing various regulations,‡ worship other gods impelled as they are by their own nature. Whichever different forms of deities a devotee worships with faith

* This chapter contains quotations from the slokas 16—28, chapter VII., and from slokas 11—34, chapter VIII., Gita.

† We need not perhaps tell our readers that Vasudeva is one of the names of Krishna. Here of course it refers to the Supreme One.

‡ The word is *Niyaman*. It refers to the various vows, sacrifices, rites &c. performed by the ancient Aryans with the purpose of obtaining wealth, power &c. in this life and heaven and celestial pleasures in the next. We need not say it refers to the religion and religious rites then extant.

and reverence, I make his faith steady and firm in that form. Endued with this firm faith, such a devotee adores the deity in that form and obtains from him all that he desires, though they are really given by me. But the fruits thus obtained by men of little knowledge are perishable. They go to those gods, but my devotees come to me. Those of little knowledge consider me manifest,* not knowing my eternal, most excellent and transcendent state. I am not manifest to all, shrouded as I am by my power of Illusion.† This ignorant world knows not me who am unborn and undecaying. I know, O Arjuna, things that are passed, things that are present, and things that will be in the future, But there is none who knows me. From the pairs of opposites and from the results of desire and aversion, all beings are deluded.‡ But those doers of good deeds whose sins are destroyed, being freed from the pairs of opposites and becoming firm in faith, worship me.§”

* The word is *Byaktimāpanna*. It literally means “in the form of man.” We believe here it is used in a general sense ; therefore we have translated it by “manifest.”

† The word is *Yoga-maya*. We have translated it by “power of Illusion.”

‡ The pairs of opposites, =heat and cold, pleasure and pain &c. The passage means that as man is liable to heat and cold, pleasure and pain, and as he is full of desire and aversion,—he is not in a position to know God. He is ruled by his mind and senses ;—so long he is not able to rise above their influences, he will be unable to attain to the Supreme.

§ Just after this Krishna adds,—“Those who, depending on me, tries to obtain release from decay and death, know Brahma, the entire *Adhyatman* and all *Actions*. They, who know me with *Adhibhata*, *Adhidaiva* and *Adhijajna*, their minds fixed in abstraction, know me at the time of their departure from this world.” The Gita, chapter VII, slokas 29—30.

“What is Brahma,” asked Arjuna, “what is *Adhyatman*, and what is *Action* ? And what is meant by *Adhivuta*, *Adhidaiva*, and *Adhijajna* ! How do they exist in this body ?”

"He, who abandons his body remembering me at the last moment, undoubtedly comes to my essence. Whichever essences one remembers and ponders upon when one leaves this body and departs from this world, to that essence he goes on account of his habitual meditation upon it.* Therefore remember me at all times, and engage in battle.† Fixing your mind and understanding on me you will surely come to me."‡

"Not knowing my Supreme Nature, the foolish people of vain hopes, vain acts and vain knowledge, of confounded minds, of the delusive nature of *Asarus* and *Raksasas*,§ insult me when I am in the human body.||

"Brahma is the Supreme and indestructible One," replied Krishna, "*Adhyatman* is His manifestation (Nature); the birth and the gradual growth of all beings and all God's works are *Actions*. The mortal state of beings is *Adhivuta*; *Pupasha* (Brahma) is *Adhidaiva*, and I myself is *Adhijajna*." The Gita, chapter VIII., slokas 3—4.

* Whatever one always meditates and ponders upon he becomes that in his after-life. Whatever deity one adores he goes to that deity.

† If you always meditate upon God, you have no fear in death, for if you die in the battle, you would then go to Him. Therefore Krishna says, "Arise and fight."

‡ This portion is a quotation from the Gita, chapter VIII., slokas 5—7.

§ See foot-note in page 21. The *Asuras* and *Raksasas* are demoniac beings. The character of a man of an *Asura* nature is the result of *Tama* quality and that of *Raksasa* nature is the result of *Raja* quality.

|| The word is *Manushin Tanuasritam*, literally "resting in the body of man." This passage is variously explained; many saying that it refers to Krishna as a man and as a Vrismi Prince. They say it means "that people not knowing who Krishna really was insult him."

In our humble opinion the passage bears a general sense. It means that not knowing that God lives as Soul or Self in every man, people disregard their own bodies and souls. If people know that God is in him as well as in every man, they would have loved, respected and adored their own bodies and souls as well as those of all other men.

"But the high-souled and divine-natured devotees, knowing me as the origin of all things, worship me with mind directed to nothing else. Some always glorifying me, some having firm vows, some bowing down to me with reverence, some being always devoted to me,—thus do they worship me. Others again, performing the sacrifice of knowledge, worship me as One ; some as distinct, and some again as pervading the universe in many forms."*

"Those, who know the three Knowledges,† who drink the *Soma* juice,‡ who offer sacrifices and whose sins are washed away, seek admission into heaven. Reaching the holy world of the lord of the celestials, they enjoy the celestial pleasures of the gods in the celestial region. Having enjoyed the pleasures of the extensive heaven, they again come to this mortal world, when their virtues are exhausted. Thus the followers of the Vedas and the men of desires again and again take their births on this earth." §

"I bestow *Yoga-Kshema*|| on those men who worship me alone without adoring any other deities, who meditate upon me, and who always dwell in me. But those devotees who worship with faith other gods also worship me, though not in the regular form ; for I am the

* This is a description of the various religious methods and rites and forms that were extant in ancient India.

† Three "knowledges" here refer to the three Vedas, *i. e.* *Rik*, *Yaju* and *Saman*.

‡ *Soma* is a creeper. A sort of intoxicating beverage was made by the ancient Aryans from the *Soma* juice.

§ The word is *Gata'gatam*, literally "going and coming."

|| It is rather difficult to translate the word *Yoga-Kshema*. It means "the final results of *Yoga*." Some commentators say, it means "*Samadhi* and its permanent existence which is final emancipation."

enjoyer as well as the giver of fruits of all sacrifices. But as these devotees do not truly know me, so have they to come back again and again in the world.* Those that worship the Devas go to the Devas,† those that worship the *Pitris* go to the *Pitris* ;‡ those that worship the *Bhutas* go to the *Bhutas* ,§ but those who worship *Me* come to me. I accept even leaves, flowers, fruits, and water from him who offers them with faith and devotion, for they are offered with faith by that man only who is self-restrained. Whatever you do, O Arjuna, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice, whatever you give, whatever meditation you perform, do it in such a way as it may be an offering to me. Thus will you be freed from the bonds of actions, the fruits of which are both good and evil. Thus imbued with *Sannyasa* and *Yoga*, you will be freed from the bonds of re-births ; you will then come to me."

" I am alike to all beings ; none is hateful,—none is dear to me. He who worships me with devotion is mine, and I am his. If even an exceedingly wicked man worships me with sole devotion,|| he should certainly be considered pious, for his efforts are well-directed. Such a man soon becomes virtuous and obtains ever-lasting Peace. Know, Arjuna, my devotee is never lost."

* Krishna means to say, "whomsoever one worships, he worships me, for I am everything,—nay every God. But though I bestow upon them wealth, pleasures &c. in this life, and heaven and other happy states in the next for thus worshipping various gods, yet they are to take birth again and again, for they do not obtain emancipation as they do not worship me."

† Devas—celestials.

‡ Pitris—the dead ancestors.

§ Bhutas—Spirits.

|| The word is *Mamanyavak*.

"Even those persons, who are of sinful birth, who are women, who are *Vaisyas* and *Sudras*,* attain to the Supreme if they take my protection. When such is the case, what should I speak of holy Brahmins and royal sages who are my devotees? Having come to this miserable and mortal world, worship me.† Fix your mind on me, become my worshipper, become my devotee, bow to me.‡ Thus depending on me and mixing your mind with me, you will certainly obtain me."§

* We need not tell our readers that in the Hindu society women, *Vaisyas* (agriculturists and artisans) and *Sudras*, (servants) held in all religious matters a very low position. But we are afraid such was not the case when Krishna was born. As we have said in the Introduction, it was a later innovation.

† What could be a better work than this?

‡ We shall ask our readers to read carefully the whole of this chapter. Is not every line of it an invaluable gem in religious, ethical, and moral instruction?

§ As in the Mahavarata, so in the 11th Book of the Vagavata, Krishna delivers a long lecture on Religion. It is a conversation between Uddhava, a devotee of Krishna, and Krishna himself, occupying no less than fourteen long chapters.

We have not dwelt upon it, for it is nothing but a learned, very learned, commentary on the Gita itself. It is exactly like any other of the numerous learned commentaries of this wonderful work. We quote two *slokas* from its last chapter. They will show that the 11th Book of the Vagavata only elaborately explains what the Gita says.

The Vagavata, Book XI., sloka 1, says :—Uddhava asked, "It is difficult for him who has not been able to control his mind to attain to such *Yoga*. Therefore tell me how a man can easily obtain success?" Krishna thus concludes his teachings. The Vagavata, Book XI., sloka 34 says, "When a man, after abandoning the desire of obtaining fruits in actions, engages himself in performing *My* works, he then, achieving immortality, becomes fit to be *one* with me."

These are almost quotations from the Gita.

CHAPTER X.

HIS EMANATIONS.

"YOU are the Supreme Brahma," said Arjuna, "the Supreme asylum, the holiest of the holy, the ever-lasting divine being, the first of gods unborn, the great Lord.* All the Rishis as well as the celestial sages,—Narada, Asita, Devala,†—say so. So do you also tell me that it is so. I believe all that you tell me. Neither the Devas

* To many of our readers this chapter would appear more poetical than historical. Perhaps the same remark would be made as regards the next chapter also. We admit, the chapters X and XI of the Gita appear in the face of them poetical, but at the same time we humbly beg to state that they cannot be thoroughly poetical, having not the least historical value in them. After hearing all that Krishna spoke to Arjuna, it would be very natural for him to ask what are the *particular* emanations of God in this world, though He is everything and in everything. If we accept the first portion of the Gita as historical, we can by no means reject these two chapters as unhistorical. In finding out historical facts from events that happened some three thousand years ago and from descriptions that were penned at least two thousand years ago, we must take that only as fact which appears natural and which has the appearance of being true. If the first portion of the Gita or some thing akin to it was really spoken to Arjuna, as we have ventured to say it was, then it is natural that Arjuna should be eager to know the *particular* emanations of God in this world. It is also natural that he should then be eager to see the Great Form of the Supreme One that lies behind this universe which is His manifested form. In fact if we drop chapters X. and XI. of the Gita, it becomes incomplete.

We need not tell our readers the whole of this chapter is a gem in literature.

† These are three great *Rishis*. We have very little historical facts to narrate about them. For Narada, See our note in vol. I, pg. 51.

nor the Danavas* understand your manifestations. O best of beings, O creator of all things, O Lord of all, God of all gods, the Ruler of the universe, you yourself only know you by your great Self."

"Tell me, O Lord, your divine emanations by which you remain pervading all these worlds. O Lord of mystic powers, how shall I know you by always meditating on you? In what particular manifestations of yours should I meditate on you? O exalted One, declare to me in detail your powers and emanations,† for I am not yet satiated with having tasted this ambrosia."

"O Arjuna," replied Krishna, "I shall tell you my divine emanations, but I shall only mention the chief ones, for there is no end of my emanations."

"I am the Self in the body of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of every thing. I am *Vishnu* amongst the *Adityas*,‡ the all-resplendent sun amongst all shining bodies. I am *Marichi* amongst *Marutas*§ and the moon among constellations. I am

* The Devas and the Danavas are said to be the descendants of two sisters *Diti* and *Aditi*. The sons of *Diti* are the Danavas and of *Aditi* the Devas. The Devas and the Danavas might be translated as the "celestials" and the "Demons." Formerly they lived in amity, but when they churned the great ocean to procure ambrosia, they fell out; for the Devas drank up the whole of ambrosia by a stratagem. The Danavas were thus made mortals, whereas the Devas became immortals. From that day a great feud raged between them; sometimes the Danavas becoming victorious and sometimes the Devas. The whole of the Hindu mythology is full of the descriptions of these wars.

† The words are *Yoga* and *Bivuti*.

‡ *Aditya* means "sun". Here it means a certain order of celestials. *Vishnu* is one of the Hindu Trinity,—the protector of the world.

§ *Maruta* is the wind. Here it means a certain order of celestials. *Marichi* is the chief of the *Marutas*.

the *Sama Veda* amongst the Vedas,* I am Mind amongst the senses, and consciousness of all living things. I am *Sanker* amongst the *Rudras*,† *Varuna* amongst the *Yakshas*,‡ *Pavaka* amongst the *Vasus*,§ and *Meru* amongst all mountain peaks.”||

“Know me to be *Vrihaspati* amongst the chief priests¶ and *Skanda* amongst all commanders of forces.§ I am ocean amongst all waters. I am *Vrigu* among all great Rishis,** *Om* among all words,†† *Japajjna* among all sacrifices‡‡ and *Himalaya* among all mountains. I am the Fig-tree among all trees; *Narada* among all celestial Rishis, *Chaitraratha* among all *Gandharvas*§§ and *Kapila* among all *Siddhas*.”|||

* We need not tell our readers that *Sama* is one of the three Vedas.

† The *Rudras* are also a certain order of celestials. *Sankara* is *Siva*, one of the Hindu Trinity,—the destroyer.

‡ *Yakshas* are a certain order of beings lower than the celestials and higher than man. They are supposed to be the lords of wealth. *Varuna* is their chief and king.

§ *Vasus* are a certain order of celestials,—*Pavaka* is their chief. *Pavaka* means “fire”.

|| According to the ancient geographers of India, Mount *Meru* is the highest peak in the world.

¶ *Vrihaspati* is the preceptor as well as the chief priest of the celestials.

§ *Skanda* is *Kartikeya*, the son of *Siva* and *Durga*. He is the generalissimo of the celestial army.

** *Vrigu* was a very great sage.

†† *Om* is the most sacred word of the Hindus. They believe the word to be *Brahma* himself.

‡‡ *Japajjna* = sacrifice of reciting the name of God.

§§ The *Gandharvas* are an order of being lower than the celestials but higher than man. They are said to be very handsome and highly proficient in music. *Chitraratha* is their king.

||| *Siddhas* are those who have become successful in obtaining final emancipation.

"Know me to be *Ugrasrava* among all horses* and *Airavata* among all elephants.† I am *Vajra* among all weapons.‡ I am *Kamadhanu* among the cows.§ I am *Kandarpa* that generates."||

"I am *Vasuki* among serpents, *Ananta* among all the *Nagas*,¶ *Varuna* among all aquatic beings.§ I am *Aryamana* among the *Pitris*** and *Yama* among all that dispense justice and punishment.†† I am *Prolhada* among the *Daityas*,‡‡ and *Kala* among all that

* *Ugrasrava* is the horse that was obtained by the celestials at the time of the churning of the ocean.

† *Airavata* was the elephant that the lord of the celestials got by churning the ocean.

‡ Thunder or *Vajra* is the weapon of Indra.

§ *Kamadhanu* is the celestial cow,—supposed to give milk whenever asked.

|| *Kandarpa* is the God of Love.

¶ *Vasuki* is the king of snakes. We would refer our readers to our note Vol. I. pg. 4. The *Nagas* &c. were not snakes ;—some time they are described as beings lower than the celestials but higher than man,—sometimes again they are described as beings lower than man. *Ananta* is the chief of the *Nagas*.

§ *Varuna* is the king of all aquatic creatures. He is supposed to be one of the gods. Time was when he was the chief god of the ancient Aryans. See note in Vol. I. pg. 41.

** *Aryamana* was a Rishi.

†† *Yama* is the god of death. He is also the dispenser of justice and punishment in the universe.

‡‡ The *Daityas* and the *Danavas* are the same. *Prolhada* was the son of *Hirannyakashipu*, a great *Danava* king. But he became a great devotee of *Vishnu*. His father made various attempts to kill him, but *Pralhada* escaped through his great devotion to *Vishnu*. At last his irascible father brought him before him and questioned him about *Vishnu*. The boy said he was everywhere and in everything. The wrathful *Danava* cried, "Is he here in this pillar?" "Yes, he is," replied the boy. The king struck the pillar with all his might, and instantly issued from it a fearful figure with a human body but a lion's head. He killed the *Danava* then and there. This is said to be one of the incarnations of *Vishnu*, called *Narasingha*. The story of *Pralhada* is to be found in almost all *Puranas*.

count.* I am lion among all beasts of prey and *Garuda* among the birds.† I am wind among those that move ; Rama among all wielders of weapons.‡ I am *Makara* among the fishes§ and the Ganges among all rivers.”

“ I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all created things ; I am the knowledge of the Supreme One among all kinds of knowledge. I am the Argument of all debators. I am the first letter of the alphabet, I am *Danda* among all *Somasas*,|| I am the eternal Time ; I am the creator of the universe. I am the source of all that is to be. I am all destroying Death among all destroyers.”

“ Among females, I am Fame, Fortune, Speech, Memory, and Metres.¶ I am *Margashirsha* among months\$ and flowery Spring among the seasons. I am the dice-game among all cheating acts. I am the might of the mighty ; I am victory, I am industry, I am the goodness of the good. I am Vasudeva among the Vrisnis**

* *Kala* is Time.

† *Garuda* is the king of birds. The god Vishnu is said to ride on it.

‡ Rama here most likely refers to Purusha Rama, the son of Jamadagni. He is said to have exterminated the Khashtrya race twenty-one times. We are sorry we cannot agree with Telang in this matter.

§ Makara is a big fish,—something like a shark.

|| *Somasas* are the “copulatives” of the Sanskrit Grammar. *Danda* is one of the *Somasas*.

¶ All these in Sanskrit are in the feminine gender.

\$ *Margashirsha* or *Magha* is the name of a month,—it is January and February.

** Vasudeva is Krishna, and the Vrisnis are a clan of the Yadava race.

and Arjuna amongst the Pandavas. I am Vyasa among the *Rishis* and *Ushanas* among the Seers.”*

“I am the rod of the chastisers ;† I am the policy of those that seek victory. I am silence in all secrets, and knowledge in all the learned. I am, O Arjuna, that which is the seed of all things. There is nothing movables and immovables which can exist without me.”

“There is no end of my divine emanations. O Arjuna, I tell you only a part of my endless emanations. Whatever there is of power, of glory, of splendour,—know them all produced from a portion of my energy. But, O Arjuna, what have you to do with the knowledge of all this in detail? Know, I stand, supporting this entire universe with but a portion of myself.”‡

* We may mention here that if Buddhism, Christianity, Mohammedanism and other religions were extant when Krishna uttered these wonderful words, he would have surely added, “I am Gautama Buddha amongst the Buddhists ; I am Jesus amongst the Christians ; I am Mohamet amongst the Mohammedans” &c.

† “Chastisers” here means those whose duty is to inflict punishment in this world.

‡ We shall now quote the other passages in which Krishna speaks of the emanations of God. The Gita, chap. VII, *Slokas* 8—11 say :—“I am the *taste* in water, I am the *light* in the sun and moon, I am *Om* in all the Vedas, the *sound* in space and *manliness* in man. I am the *fragrance* on earth, the *refulgence* in fire ; I am the *life* in all beings, and the *penance* in ascetics. Know me to be ever-lasting *Seed* of all beings ; I am the *intelligence* of all intelligent men and the *glory* of all glorious objects. I am the *strength* of the strong who are freed from desire and thirst. I am the *love* among all beings.”

The Gita, chap. IX, *Slokas* 16—19 say :—“I am the Vedic sacrifice. I am the sacrifice laid down in the *Smriti* (Hindu religious Books), I am the *Sabda* (mantra), I am the libation, I am the fire, and I am also the offerings of a sacrifice. I am the father of this universe, its mother, its creator, its grandsire. I am the thing to be and the means by which every thing is purified.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE GREAT MANIFESTATION.

"THE excellent and mysterious words," said Arjuna, "which you have told me about the Supreme Self and the Individual Self* have removed my delusion. I have heard from you in detail the Mystery of Production and Dissolution of Things. I have heard about your inexhaustible Greatness."

"O great Lord, what you have said about you is perfectly true. But, O highest of all things, I desire to see your Divine Form. If, O Lord, you think that I am competent to see that Form of yours, then, O Lord, show me your inexhaustible Form."

"Behold, Partha," replied Krishna, "my *Forms* by hundreds and thousands. They are various, divine, and different in colour and form.† Behold, Arjuna, the entire universe of movables and immovables and whatever else you wish to see all collected in my this body. But you are not fit to see me in my Divine Form with your these eyes. Therefore I give you divine sight. Behold now my great Mystic Form."[‡]

* The word is *Adhyatmasangitam*, literally "Knowledge of the Supreme Self in relation to the Individual (human) Self or Soul."

† Here is a *śloka* we have dropped considering it unimportant.

‡ The word is *Yogamaishwaram*, literally "greatly divine *Yoga*-powers." As Krishna bestowed upon Arjuna the divine sight, we have thought it proper to use here the word "the mystic form."

Having said this, the mighty Lord of Mystic Powers,* Hari,† revealed to Arjuna his great Divine Form.‡

No pen can describe what Arjuna saw. No pen can paint the feelings that the Pandava prince felt on seeing what none else could ever see.§ He was struck with

* The word is *Mahayogashwara*.

† Hari is a name of Vishnu.

‡ The word is *Rupamaishwaram*.

§ We are aware that there will be good deal of difference of opinion amongst our readers about this matter. We shall not enter into a controversy over such a crude point such as the possibility of human being's *seeing* the Supreme One. However, if we believe the religious books of the world, we think we are also bound to believe it. Moses saw Him, Jesus saw Him,—not to speak of the Hindu Rishis. It is all a matter of faith and devotion, and no amount of paper discussion will help us in any way in this matter.

The Gita attempts to describe what Arjuna saw. It says that he saw the Form of Destruction of the Supreme One. We quote the passage in full for what it is worth. The Gita, chap XI. slokas 9—34. say :—"O great king, having said this, the mighty Lord of mystic powers, Hari, revealed to Partha his great divine Form. With many mouths and eyes, with many wonderful aspects, with many celestial ornaments, with many upraised celestial weapons, adorned with celestial garlands and robes, embalmed with celestial fragrance, and full of every wonder, it is resplendent and infinite with faces turned on all sides. If the splendour of one thousand suns bursts forth all at once in the sky, that would be something like the splendour of that great One. Then the son of Pandu (Arjuna) saw the entire universe, divided and subdivided into many parts, but all collected together in the body of that God of all gods. "O mighty-armed," said Arjuna, "all creatures are frightened, and seeing also your mighty Form with many mouths and eyes, with innumerable arms, thighs, feet and bellies, and terrible on account of many tusks, I can no longer command courage, or enjoy peace of mind. Seeing your mighty form which is touching the very skies, which is fiery, radiant, many-winged, widely open-mouthed and with large and blazing eyes, seeing your mouth terrible with tusks and fearful as the all-destroying Fire at the final end of the *Yuga*, I cannot recognise the points of the horizon or command my peace of mind. All the sons of Dhritarashtra together with the host of kings, Bhishma, Drona and Suta's son, Karna with all the principle warriors of our side are all quickly entering your terrible mouths rendered more terrible by their tusks. Some, with their heads crushed, stick at the interstices of your teeth. As many currents of waters, flowing through different channels, rolled rapidly

awe ; he was dumb ; he was fainting ; he trembled from head to foot ; his hair stood on end ; he knew not what he saw and what he felt, except that he was in extreme ecstasy.*

into the ocean, so these heroes of the world enter into your blazing mouths. As insects for their own destruction rush in increasing speed into the blazing fire, so these men, with unceasing speed, enter into your mouths for their own destruction. Devouring all these men from every side, you lick them with your flaming mouths. O Vishnu, your fearful splendour, filling the whole universe with your great energy, heat everything. Tell me who you are with this fearful form ? I bow down my head to you ; be gracious to me, O chief of the gods. I desire to know you, Primeval One ; for I do not understand your actions." "I am," said Krishna, "the full manifestation of Death, the destroyer of the worlds. All these warriors, standing in different divisions, will cease to be, even if you do not kill them. Therefore, arise and gain glory. Vanquishing the foe, enjoy this great kingdom. All these men are already slain by me ; be my instrument only. Kill Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha and Karna and all these brave warriors ; they are already killed by me. Do not be dismayed. Fight,—you will surely conquer your foes in battle."

* We give below a free translation of Slokas 36-46, chap XI, Gita, We have, however, dropped the repetitions and unnecessary words.

"Then filled with amazement, Dhananjaya, with his hair standing on end, his head lowly bowed down, and his palms joined together, addressed the great God thus" :—

"I behold, O great God, all the celestials and all the varied hosts of creatures. I behold *Brahma* seated on his lotus-seat ; I behold all the great *Rishis* and divine *Nagas*. O you of infinite forms, I behold you on every side with innumerable arms, bellies, mouths and eyes. O Lord of the universe, O you of universal form, I do see neither your end nor middle, nor the beginning. I behold you immeasurable,—you whom it is difficult to look at. I behold you, bearing your diadem, mace and discus, glowing in all sides, possessing a mass of energy, and being subdued with the effulgence of the blazing fire of the sun. I behold you, possessing infinite prowess and innumerable arms, having the sun and the moon as your two eyes, and the blazing fire as your mouth ; I behold you heating the universe with your own great energy. The space between heaven and earth and all the points of the horizon are pervaded by you alone. The three worlds tremble, O Supreme Self, at the sight of your this marvellous and fierce form. You are

Recovering his power of speech, he fell on his knees and bowed again and again to Krishna. Joining his palms, he then thus addressed to the Highest of the High. "It is quite natural that the universe is delighted in singing your praise. O Infinite One, O God of gods, you are that which *is* and that which *is not* and that which *is beyond* both the existents and non-existents. You are the First God, the Ancient Being. You are the Supreme Refuge of the world. I bow down my head to you a thousand times. Again and yet again I bow down my head to you. My salutation to you in front ; my salutation to you from behind ; my salutation to you from every side. You are all."

"O Krishna, O Yadava, O friend, O Infinite One, I beg your pardon for whatever was carelessly said by me, and whatever disrespect has been shown to you by me out of love and out of friendship. You are the Father of the universe, you are the great Master. O Lord, prostrating myself before you, I ask your grace. Seeing your this Form unseen before by man, I am delighted,* but my

imperishable, and the Supreme Object of this universe. You are undecaying and the guardian of everlasting virtue. I find you the eternal great Being. Hosts of celestials enter into you ; some perhaps being afraid pray with joined hands, saying *Hail to Thee*. Hosts of great *Rishis* and *Sidhas* praise you with innumerable hymns of praise. The *Rudras*, the *Vasus*, the *Aswinas*, the *Marutas*, the *Ushanas*, the *Gandharvas*, the *Rakshasas*, the *Asuras*, and hosts of *Siddhas* see you ; and they are all amazed."

* In sloka 46, chap XI., Arjuna says, "Be of that *four-armed form*". We need not say that the God Vishnu, whose incarnation Krishna is said to be, has four arms. Did Aarjuna desire to see Krishna's that four-armed *i. e.*, Vishnu Form, or did he desire to see his ordinary human form, *i. e.* as the Vrishi prince with two arms ?

In sloka 50 Sanjaya says, "Vasudeva then once more showed him his *own form*". Here the name of Krishna is given as Vasudeva, the son of Basudeva, the Vrishi chief. Therefore, showing his *own form* cannot mean any thing else but the human form.

mind has been filled with extreme fear. Show me, O God, your ordinary form. Be gracious."

"O Arjuna," replied Krishna, "being pleased with you, I have shown to you, through my mystic powers, this my Supreme Form,—glorious, universal, infinite and primeval."*

Having said this Krishna once more showed his own form. "O Krishna," said Arjuna, "seeing your this gentle human form, I have again come to my right mind and to my normal state."

"O Arjuna," replied Krishna, "the Form of mine which you have just now seen is difficult to be seen. Even the celestials are always eager to see my this Great Form. Not by the study of the Vedas, not by penances, gifts or sacrifices, can I be seen in this Form of mine which you have seen."

"But, O Arjuna, by undeviating devotion† to me, I can in this Form be known, truly seen and attained to. O Arjuna, he, who is a Worker of my Works, who has made me his Supreme Object, who is free from attachments, and who has no enmity towards any creature, attains to me.‡

Krishna then thus concluded his great teachings to

Just in the next sloka 51 we find Arjuna says, "Seeing your this gentle *human-form*." Here human form is distinctly mentioned, the word being *Manuṣaṇ Rūpam*. Therefore we humbly think that the word *Chaturbhujana* is here either interpolated or put in the place of another word when Krishna became recognised as an incarnation of Vishnu.

* We have dropped two slokas 48 and 49, being not very important.

† The word is *Ananyaya Bhaktiya*.

‡ We need not say "my" or "me" here refers to the Supreme One. This is the key-note of Srikrishna's teachings.

his friend and pupil. "Mentally dedicating to Me all actions at all times, resorting to mental abstraction, and being fully devoted to Me, fix all your thoughts constantly on Me. Fixing your thoughts on Me, you will surmount all difficulties through My favour. But if from self-conceit you do not listen to Me, you will then surely perish."

"If out of self-conceit you think 'I will not fight,' your this resolution will be in vain; for surely will Nature rule you. Bound by your own Duty and ordained by Nature, you will involuntarily do that which, out of your mental delusion, you do not want to do. O Arjuna, the Lord, as if mounting on a machine, seat in the heart of all beings and turn them as He pleases by His illusive powers. Therefore, O Arjuna, seek shelter in Him in every way. By His favour, you will get the Supreme Peace and the Eternal Seat."

"I have thus, O friend, declared to you the knowledge which is more mysterious than any other mystery. Reflect on it fully, and then act as you like. Once more hear my words,—the most mysterious mystery of all. You are very dear to me, therefore I tell you what is good for you."

"Fix your heart on Me; become My devotee; sacrifice to Me; bow down to Me,—you will then come to Me. I tell you truly, for you are very dear to me. Forsaking all religious duties extant, come to Me; come to Me as your sole refuge. I shall deliver you from all your sins; do not grieve."*

* This is a quotation from the last chapter of the Gita, i. e. Chap XVIII, slokas 57—66 and 73.

“My delusion is gone,” said Arjuna, “O Lord, through your favour I now know what I am. I am now firm. My doubts have now been dispelled. I will obey you. I will do your bidding.”*

* We have already said in our previous notes that chap 12th to the last chapter, *i. e.* 18th of the Gita, all these seven chapters are rather explanatory to the previous eleven chapters. Our readers will find, if they compare our notes on the Gita with a complete Gita, that we have left nothing, but put almost all of these seven chapters, from 12th to 18th, in our notes on chapters 1st to 11th which we give in our text.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GREAT BATTLE.

THE auspicious day at last arrived and the great battle began.* From the early dawn of day both armies were astir ; generals ran from divisions to divisions arranging their troops ; car-warriors filled their respective chariots with all kinds of offensive and defensive weapons ; elephant-men and horse-men placed themselves in their respective posts ; and foot-soldiers arranged themselves in rows with their clubs, spears and swords upraised.† Drums, trumpets, tumborines, and pipes filled the earth with their loud shrilling music.‡ The sounds of conchs were heard from every part of the field.‡

* We now enter upon the most difficult portion of our task in finding out historical facts from fictions and fables in the life of Sri-krishna. The *Parvas* of the Mahavarata that treat of the great battle are full of so many interpolations, contradictory statements, and repetitions that it is almost impossible to find out what was really the original descriptions of this battle as narrated by Vyasa. These *Parvas* are the worst portion of the Mahavarata ; they are so very different from and inferior both in the style and in poesy to the other portions of the Mahavarata that one is almost led to believe that the original description of the battle as written by Vyasa was lost, and some inferior writers in subsequent years re-wrote these accounts of the battle. We, however, after repeatedly going through these pages and after comparing these accounts with those found in other Sanskrit works, have come to some conclusions. We have put down here the results of our researches, and we humbly hope that what we write was the real facts. We need not say we shall mention, as we proceed, what we have rejected and what we have accepted from these accounts of the battle that cover no less than six Parvas of the Mahavarata.

† We shall quote in this chapter and the chapter following a few passages from the Mahavarata to give our readers an idea of the mode in which battles were fought in ancient India.

‡ Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, chap. I., slokas 20—32 say :—

The great Bhishma was astir before any body had arisen. He had agreed to be the generalissimo of the Kuru army for ten days. Every body, therefore, knew that the Kuru army and the Kuru princes were safe from the all-destroying arrows of Arjuna and all fearful club of Bhimasena at least for these ten days. The old grand-father of the Kuru race, Bhishma, moved from one part of the field to the other inspecting minutely the arrangements of the army made by the various generals. He placed the various divisions of the army in proper order,—the order in which each deserved to be placed according to the exigencies of the coming battle.

The same was done by Dhristadumna and Bhimasena in the other camp. Each general had hundreds of car-warriors to back him ; each car-warrior again was supported by thousands of horse-men and elephant-men. Behind and before and all around, as necessity required, stood innumerable foot-soldiers,—all determined to die or win the battle. Thus according to the fixed rules of

"Then the Kurus, the Pandavas and the Panchalas made certain agreements and settled some rules regarding different kinds of fight. Men that are equally situated should only fight with one another with all fairness. Those who engage in a battle of words should be fought against with only words. Those that leave the fight should never be killed. A car-warrior should fight only with a car-warrior. He who rides on an elephant should fight only with another such combatant. A horseman must fight with a horseman and foot-soldier with a foot-soldier. Always being led by the consideration of fitness, willingness, bravery and strength, one should strike another after having challenged him. None should strike another who is confiding or who is panic-stricken. One fighting with another, one seeking refuge, one retreating, one whose weapon is broken and one who is not clad in armour should never be struck. Charioteers, animals, men engaged in carrying weapons, those who play on drums and those who blow conchs should never be smitten."

war, every thing was arranged and made ready by both the contending armies to begin the great battle.*

We shall here quote only two passages which will give our readers a very fair idea of the Kuru and the Pandava armies on the field of Kurushkhetra. Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, chap. XX., slokas 3—20 say :—

“When placed in battle-array, both the armies were equally cheerful. Both the armies looked equally beautiful. They looked like two blossoming woods, and they were full of elephants, cars and horses. Both the armies were huge and fearful. None of them could bear the other. Both of them were arrayed as if they would conquer the very heavens. Both of them consisted of excellent soldiers. The armies of Dhritarashtra's son stood facing the west; the Pandavas stood facing the east,—all ready for fight. The Kuru troops looked like the army of the Danava chief, while the Pandava troops looked like the army of the celestials. The wind blew from behind the Pandavas. The beasts of prey yelled from behind the troops of your sons. The elephants, belonging to your sons, could not bear the strong odour of the juice emitted by the large (Pandava) elephants.”

“Durjodhana rode on a lotus-complexioned elephant with its temples rent, adorned with a golden *howda* and clad in a steel armour. He was in the very centre of the Kurus. He was being adored by eulogists and bards. A white umbrella, adorned with a golden chain as effulgent as the moon, was held over his head. The ruler of Gandhara, Sakuni, followed him with innumerable mountaineers of Gandhara. The venerable Bhishma was at the head of the army. With a white umbrella held over his head, with a white head-dress (on his head), with a white bow and sword (in his hand), with a white banner (on his car) and with white horses (yoked to his car) he looked like a (great) white mountain.”

“The illustrious Drona, the preceptor of almost all the kings, with a bow in hand, and with never-failing heart, stationed on a golden car yoked with red horses, remained behind all the troops, thus protecting them like Indra.”

“That large force which was well-protected by the great car-warriors of the Vrishi and the Bhoja races and also by the warriors of Saurashtra,—all well-armed and well-skilled in the use of arms,—the force which was under the command of Kritavarmana, marched to the south of your army. Ten thousand *Sansaptaka* car-warriors who were created for either the death or the fame of Arjuna, who were all greatly accomplished in arms, and who intended to follow Arjuna at every step, marched out with the Trigarttas.”

“O descendant of Bharata, in your army there were one hundred thousand elephants of the greatest fighting powers. To each elephant was assigned one hundred car-warriors, to each car was assigned one hundred horse-men, to each horse-man, ten bowmen,

We shall now quote the ancient chronicler.* "Thereupon lion-like roars, clamorous shouts, the blare

to each bow-man, ten soldiers armed with shields. Thus, O descendant of Bharata, were your troops placed by Bhishma in battle-array."

"On every succeeding morning your generalissimo Bhishma, the son of Shantanu, sometimes placed your troops in the human, sometimes in the celestial, sometimes in the Gandharva and sometimes in the Asura *Buhas*. With innumerable great car-warriors roaring like the very ocean, the army of Dhritarashtra's son, arrayed by Bhishma, stood ready for battle, facing the west. O king, your army looked terrible, but the Pandava army appeared to me very large and invincible, for Arjuna and Krishna were its leaders."

Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, chap. XXII. slokas 3—13 say:—
"In the centre stood Shikandin and his men protected by Arjuna. Dhristadumna was in the front protected by Bhima. O king, the southern division of the army was protected by that great bowman, the handsome Yuyudhana, that foremost of the Satwata heroes, who was equal to Indra himself. Yudhisthira was on a car which was worthy of carrying Indra himself. It was adorned with an excellent standard decked with gold and gems. It was furnished with golden traces. He stood in the midst of his elephant corps. His milk-white umbrella, with ivory handle, held over his head, looked exceedingly beautiful. Many great Rishis walked round the king uttering the words of praise. Many priests, Brahmins, Rishis, Siddhas, as they walked round him, chanted hymns in his praise. They wished the destruction of his enemies by the help of *japas* and *mantras*, efficacious drugs and various propitiatory ceremonies. The illustrious Pandava chief then gave away to the Brahmins kine, fruits, flowers, golden coins and cloths. He marched like Indra, the chief of the celestials."

"Arjuna's car, furnished with hundreds of bells, decked with gold, fitted with excellent wheels, endued with the effulgence of fire and yoked with best steeds, looked as brilliant as one thousand suns. On this grand car, which was driven by Keshava (Krishna), stood the ape-bannered hero with Gandiva (bow) and arrows in his hand,—a great bow-man whose equal there is none on earth or none will be."

"He who assumes the most terrible appearance for crushing your sons, he who without any weapon but only with his bare arms pounds to dust men, horses and elephants, that mighty-armed Bhimasena, that Vrikodara, accompanied by the twins (Nakula and Sahadeva), protected the (Pandava) car-warriors. Seeing the invincible Vrikodara like a fearful lion of sportive gait, like a proud leader of a herd of elephants, like the great Indra himself, your soldiers, with their strength weakened by fear, began to tremble like elephants sunk in mud."

* See Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, chapter XLIV, and chapter XLV.

of cow-horns and the sounds of drums, cymbals, and tabors rose in both the armies. The soldiers of the enemy rushed upon us,* and we also rushed upon them with loud shouts. The vast armies of the Kurus and the Pandavas shook in that fearful and sanguinary battle by the sounds of conchs and cymbals as a forest is shaken by the wind."

"Then all the brothers, your sons, Durjodhana and others, shaking their bows and taking out long arrows, surrounded that great bow-man Bhima and covered him with a shower of arrows. The sons of Draupadi, the son of Subhadra Abhimanyu, Nakula, Sahadeva, Dhristadumna all rushed against the warriors of Durjodhana's army and tore them asunder with sharp arrows as the submits of mountain-peaks are broken down by the thunder-bolts."

"Under the command of your son the warriors rushed upon the enemy at the head of their respective troops. Fearful was the uproar, mingled as it was with the lion-like shouts of the warriors and the fearful din made by the sounds of conchs and drums, made by the elephants and horses of the kings rushing to the charge. While fighting or retreating or rallying again, neither the men of our side nor those of the enemies could be distinguished. But your uncle Bhishma shone transcending all those countless hosts in that fearful and terrible battle."

"The twang of the bow-strings, the heavy tread of infantry, the furious neighing of horses, the falling of sticks and iron-hooks, the clash of weapons, the jingle of bells

* All these descriptions were given by Sanjaya to the old blind king Dhritarastra. This portion of the Mahavarata is a dialogue between the Kuru minister Sanjaya and the Kuru king Dhritarastra.

round the necks of elephants rushing upon one another, the clatter of the wheels of cars that resembled the roars of cloud, all these mingled together produced a hair-stirring uproar. All the Kuru warriors, reckless of their lives, rushed upon the Pandavas with cruel intentions. Taking up a fearful bow that resembled the rod of Death the son of Santanu, Bhishma, rushed upon the Pandavas. Arjuna also, taking up his bow Gandiva of wide world fame, rushed upon the son of Ganga, Bhishma, on the field of battle. Though mighty Bhishma pierced Arjuna with his arrows, yet he could not make him waver. The son of Pandu, Arjuna, also could not make him waver."

"The great bow-man Satyaki rushed against Kritavarma. The fight between these two heroes was extremely fearful and hair-stirring. Satyaki wounded Kritavarma and Kritavarma wounded Satyaki with loud shouts, and they thus weakened each other. Pierced all over the body with arrows, these two great warriors shone like two blossoming *Kinsukas** when they are adorned with flowers in Spring."

"The great bow-man Abhimanyu faught with Brihatvala, the ruler of Kosala,† who cut off the standard and overthrew the charioteer of the son of Subhadra. The king Judhishthira himself faught with the king of Madra‡ who cut off his bow. Thereupon Judhishthira took up another stronger bow and called aloud to his adversary, "Wait." He then covered the king of Madra with a shower of arrows."

"Dhishadumna rushed upon Drona. In great anger Drona cut off the strong bow of the illustrious Panchala

* *Kinsuka* is a tree which produce a very red flowers.

† Kosala is modern Oude.

prince. He then shot a fearful arrow at him which was like the second rod of Yama. The arrow thus shot penetrated into the body of the prince. Taking up another bow and fourteen arrows, the son of Drupada then pierced Drona with them. Enraged with each other they faught on like two mad bulls.*

"Thus in that battle thousands of single combats were faught between car-warriors, elephant-men, horse-men, and foot-soldiers of both the armies. For a short time the battle looked beautiful, but it soon grew furious ; it became confused and fierce in the extreme.†

* It will be found that in this battle Krishna apparently took very little active part except giving advices to the Pandavas. But though unarmed and non-fighting, though he was but a charioteer in this great battle, yet he was in fact the central figure,—he was the axle round which the two wheels,—namely the Kurus and the Pandavas,—rolled.

† Krishna was as great a master in the art of driving a chariot and looking after a horse as he was in arms or in learning. He was in fact a master in everything, in every art, in every science and in every learning. His most able charioteering saved Arjuna many times from imminent dangers. It made him more invincible and more powerful than he would have been with any other charioteer on his car. We need not quote instances of his able charioteering. It would be found all through these *Parvas*.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FIRST DAY'S BATTLE.

THUS did the battle begin. The ancient chronicler then continues* :—

“The son did not recognise the father and the father the son ; the brother did not recognise his own brother, and the sister's son did not recognise his maternal uncle ; the maternal uncle did not recognise his sister's son, and the friend did not recognise his friend. The Pandava and the Kuru forces fought as if they had been possessed by demons. Some warriors attacked with their cars the cars of the enemies and crushed the yokes of those cars to pieces. The shafts of cars broke dashing against the shafts of other cars ; the spikes of car-yokes broke against the spikes of car-yokes. Some unitedly attacked others that were united ; but all were eager to take one another's life. Some cars were obstructed by other cars, and they were unable to move. Huge elephants with rent temples fell upon other huge elephants. They angrily tore one another's body with their tusks. Others, again, attacking other impetuous and huge ones with huge standards on their backs, being wounded by tusks, roared in great agony. Disciplined by training and urged on by pikes and hook, elephants not in rut attacked those that were in rut. Huge elephants, attacked by those that were in

* We quote this long passage only to give our readers an idea of the mode in which battles were fought in ancient India. See Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, chapter XLVI.

rut, ran away in all directions, uttering cries like those of cranes. Many huge elephants, well-trained and with juice trickling down from their rent temples and mouth, having been wounded by swords, lances and arrows, shrieked aloud. Pierced in their vital parts, they fell down and expired uttering fearful cries. Some ran away in all directions."

"The foot-soldiers, that protected the elephants, that possessed broad chests, that were capable of effectually striking the foe, armed with pikes, bows, bright battle-axes, maces, clubs, arrows, lances, shafts and heavy iron-mounted bludgeons and swords of the brightest polish, ran in every direction with the firm resolve of taking one another's life. The swords of brave combatants, who rushed against one another, having been steeped in blood, shone with great brilliancy. The whizing noise of the swords, made by their whirling and falling by heroic arms, became very loud."

"Crushed with maces and clubs, cut off with swords, pierced and ground by the tusks of elephants, the combatants sent forth heart-rending wails as those of men doomed to hell. Horse-men on fleet horses with tails like the plumes of swans rushed upon one another. Hurling by them, long, fleet and polished and sharp-pointed darts, decked with gold, fell on all sides like so many snakes. Some heroic horse-men on fleet steeds leaped up and cut off the heads of car-warriors who were seated on their cars. A car-warrior, getting a body of cavalry within shooting distance, killed many with straight arrows furnished with broad heads."

"Many infuriated elephants, adorned with gold trappings and looking like newly-risen clouds, threw down the

horses and crushed them with their legs. Being struck on their frontal globes and flanks and mangled by lances, many elephants roared aloud in great agony. In the bewildering confusion of the *melee*, many elephants threw the steeds with their riders and crushed them down. Overthrowing with their tusks steeds and their riders, some elephants roved about and crushed cars with their standards. Some huge male elephants, from excess of energy and with the temporal juice gushing down from their temples in large quantities, killed horses with their riders by their trunks and legs. Polished, sharp-pointed and fleet arrows resembling snakes fell upon the heads, the temples and the flanks and the limbs of elephants."

"Fearful and polished javelins resembling large meteoric flashes, being hurled by heroic arms, fell every where piercing through the bodies of men and horses and cutting through the coats of mail. Taking out their sharp swords from sheaths made of leopard's and tiger's skins, many killed their adversaries in battle. Many warriors, though attacked and their bodies cut open, fell upon their antagonists with swords, shields and battle-axes. Some pierced by javelins, some cut down by battle-axes, some crushed by elephants, some trodden down by horses, some cut by the car-wheels and some by axes, loudly called for their kinsmen. Some called upon their sons, some upon their fathers, some upon their brothers, some upon their relatives, some upon their maternal uncles, some upon their sister's sons, and some upon their friends and others."

"A large number of combatants lost their weapons ; many had their thighs broken ; with arms torn off or sides pierced or cut open, many were seen to cry piteously

for the desire of life. Some, having but little strength and lying on the field of battle, asked for water from excessive thirst. Some, weltering in blood and becoming greatly weakened, censured themselves and abused your sons."

"There were some, who, lying on the places where they lay, roared in anger; and biting from wrath their own lips with their teeth, they looked at one another with faces rendered fearful by the contraction of their eyebrows. Others, possessing great strength and tenacity, wounded with arrows, remained perfectly silent smarting under their pains. Other brave car-warriors, deprived of their own cars in battle and thrown down and wounded by huge elephants, cried to be taken up on the cars of others. In that fearful battle, destructive of heroes, the father killed the son and the son killed the father; the sister's son killed the maternal uncle, the maternal uncle killed the sister's son; friends killed friends and kinsmen killed kinsmen. Thus took place the great slaughter in that great battle between the Kurus and the Pandavas. In that fearful and terrible battle in which no consideration was shown, the Pandavas began to waver before Bhishma."

CHAPTER XIV.



THE DEATH OF BHISMA.

THUS day after day the battle was fought, and every evening the Pandava army retired to its camp defeated and mangled, crest-fallen and routed. There was no chance of its victory so long the great Bhishma was alive. The Pandava army was dwindling down every day ; thousands and thousands had fallen. The Kuru army was full of ecstasy, but the Pandava camp had been filled with despair. Krishna knew that all this was due to Arjuna's half-heartedness in fighting with Bhishma. He saw Arjuna did not fight with his grandfather as he should have done. He avoided him, and if he fought with him, he hardly ever seriously hurt him. There was none else in the Pandava army who could defeat or kill the great Kuru chief.*

If the old Patriarch was not killed, there was no hope for the Pandavas ; their army would be annihilated before great Bhishma would leave off his bow at the end of the tenth day of his generalship of the Kuru army. Krishna determined to make Arjuna fight with all his might and kill Bhishma, his grand father though he be.

* We believe this incident is based on fact. It is natural for Arjuna to fight with half-heartedness with his beloved grandfather, and it is also natural that Krishna should take some steps to incite Arjuna to kill Bhishma. What he did was no doubt the best that could be possibly done under the circumstances to make Arjuna fight with all his might. See Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, chapter LIX.

We shall once more quote the ancient chronicler. "Then seeing the great prowess of Bhishma and the mildness with which Arjuna fought, and also seeing that Bhishma was showering a continuous shower of arrows in the battle and that he was appearing like the all consuming sun in the midst of the two armies, and marking also that the hero Bhishma was killing the foremost warriors of Yudhisthira's army and that he was making a great havoc amongst his troops as if the hour of dissolution had come, the exalted Krishna, that slayer of hostile heroes, that high-souled one, was unable to see what he saw. He thought that the army of Yudhisthira could not survive that slaughter; for Bhishma was capable of destroying all the Daityas and Danavas in a single day; with how much ease then could he kill the Pandavas with all their soldiers and followers!"

"The vast army of the illustrious Pandava king began to fly away. The grandson of Sini, Satyaki, saw Arjuna was surrounded by many thousands of horse and foot-soldiers and car-warriors and elephant-men. Having seen Krishna and Arjuna thus surrounded by infantry and elephants and horses and cars on all sides, that foremost of all wielders of arms, that chief of the Sinis, Satyaki, soon went to that place. That foremost of heroes, the Sini chief Satyaki, quickly rushed upon those troops and soon came to Arjuna's aid. He then thus addressed the troops of Yudhisthira who were all frightened by Bhishma, and whose elephants, horses, cars and numberless standards had been mangled and broken to pieces, and who were all flying away from the battle-field. 'O warriors where do you go? This is not the duty of virtuous men as declared by the ancients. O foremost of heroes, do

not violate your pledges ; observe your own duties as heroes."

" Having seen that the troops of that foremost of kings were flying away from the field of battle and having also marked the mildness with which Arjuna fought and seeing also that Bhishma was exerting himself with all his powers and that the Kurus were rushing from all sides, the illustrious protector of all the Dasarhas, Krishna, grew incapable of bearing it. He thus spoke to the famous grand-son of Sini, Satyaki. ' O hero of the Sini race, those that are retreating are retreating. O Satwata chief, those that are still staying,—let them also go away. I shall soon fell Bhishma down from his car, and Drona also, in this battle with all their followers."

" Having said this, the son of Basudeva, Krishna, threw off the reins of the horses and jumped down from the car. Whirling a chariot-wheel* with his right arm and making the earth tremble under his feet, the high-souled Krishna rushed with great force towards Bhishma. The end of his yellow garments waved in the air and looked like a cloud charged with lighting."

" Seeing that foremost of men, that divine personage advancing armed with discus, Santanu's son Bhishma, who stood on his car with his bow and arrows in hand, thus spoke, " Come, come, O Lord of the gods, O Deity that

We have already told our readers that Krishna had a most formidable weapon which was called *Chakra*—a discus. Here it is narrated that he rushed upon Bhishma with a *Chakra*, but he was then unarmed and was mere a charioteer of Arjuna ; it was not possible therefore that his *Chakra* (discus) would be near at hand and he would rush upon Bhishma with his this formidable weapon. *Chakra* also means a wheel. We believe he took up a broken wheel of a chariot from the battle-field, and armed with this he rushed upon the Kuru patriarch.

has the universe for his abode, O God armed with mace, sword and Saranga-bow, I bow to you. O Lord of the universe, forcibly fell me down from this excellent car. O Refuge of all creatures, O Krishna, if I be killed by you in this battle, great will be my good fortune both in this world and in the next.”*

“Meanwhile jumping from his car, the greatest of all warriors Arjuna ran after the Yadu chief. He soon came to him and seized him with his two arms. That first of all men, Krishna, was dissembling rage. Therefore, though thus seized, he forcibly dragged Arjuna after him as a tempest carries away a tree. The high-souled Arjuna, however, seized his legs with great force as he was rushing towards Bhishma; he succeeded in stopping him with great difficulty on the tenth step. When Krishna stopped, Arjuna, adorned with a beautiful golden garland, bowed to him, and he then thus spoke to him :—‘Quell your wrath, O Keshava, you are the refuge of the Pandavas. O Keshava, I swear by my sons and brothers that I will not withdraw from the acts to which I have pledged myself. At your command, I will certainly annihilate the Kurus.’ Having heard that promise and pledge made by Arjuna, Krishna became gratified. He was ever engaged in doing what is agreeable to that foremost of the Kurus, Arjuna. He, therefore, once more mounted on the car. That chastiser of foes once more took up the reins. Then taking up his conch, called Panchajanna, Krishna filled the sky and all the directions with its sounds.”

This shows with what great veneration Krishna was held by Bhishma. The incident is grand beyond all descriptions.

The aspect of the battle then changed. Arjuna was Arjuna again.* The battle raged most fearfully between

* We have here rejected one incident being improbable and apparently fictitious. It is said that when it was found that it was impossible for the Pandavas to defeat or to kill Bhishma, Yudhishthira, after consulting with Krishna, went to his grandfather Bhishma to ask how he could be killed. And this is what Bhishma said :—"O son of Pandu, what you have said is indeed true. I am indeed incapable of being vanquished by the celestials and the Asuras united together with Indra at their head. If I lay aside my weapons, mighty car-warriors may then slay me. One who lays his weapons aside, one who is fallen, one whose armour and standard have been shattered, one who runs away, one who is panic-stricken, one who says 'I am yours,' one who is a female, one who bears a feminine designation, one who is disabled, one who has got only one son, and one who is a mean fellow,—with these I do not fight. Hear also, O foremost of kings, about the vow that I have formerly taken. Beholding any inauspicious sign I would under no circumstance fight. That mighty car-warrior, O king, that son of Drupada, who belongs to your army, who is known under the name of Shikhandin, who is wrathful in battle, valiant and ever attended with victory, he was a female before, but afterwards attained to manhood. You all know how all this came to pass. Let the heroic Arjuna clad in mail placing Shikhandin in front of him assail me with exceedingly sharp arrows. Beholding then an inauspicious man in the person of him who was female before, I will not strike though I may be armed with arrows. Availing himself of that opportunity, let Pandu's son Dhananjaya quickly pierce me on all sides. Except the illustrious Krishna or Dhananjaya I do not find any one in the three worlds who can slay me in battle. Therefore let Arjuna armed with weapons and exerting in battle to the best of his abilities and wielding his excellent bow overthrow me in battle with arrows of various descriptions." See Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, chapter CVIII. slokas 75—87.

But it would be found later on that notwithstanding the presence of Shikhandin Bhishma fought with Arjuna and did not leave off his arms, though of course he did not strike the Panchala prince Shikhandin. Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, chapter CXVIII. slokas 7-8 say :—"Shikhandin speedily covered the grandsire Bhishma with a shower of arrows. But disregarding those arrows, your sire Bhishma, wrought up with wrath, engaged to fight with Arjuna with innumerable shafts."

This is not the only occasion where it is found that Bhishma fought with Arjuna and others notwithstanding the presence of Shikhandin. He did it many times over ; therefore this story is apparently a fiction. It was most probably added to the original story at some subsequent date in order to save Arjuna from the censure of killing his own grandfather.

Arjuna and Bhishma ; and on the evening of the 10th day, the old patriarch of the Kuru race, the greatest warrior of the age, the noble and good Bhishma fell. The ancient chronicler says :—"There was not even a space of two fingers in all his body that was not mangled with shafts. Thus your uncle, mangled with the keen-pointed darts shot by Arjuna, just little before sun-set fell down from his car on the field before the very eyes of your sons.* Then at the overthrow of Bhishma, loud lamentations of "Alas" and "Oh" were heard among the kings. Beholding the illustrious grandsire's fall, they all became dejected and depressed at heart. That foremost of all bow-men, that mighty-armed hero, fell like an uprooted standard placed in honour of Indra, causing the earth to tremble. Covered with arrows, he did not touch the earth's surface. Then as that mighty bow-man, that foremost of all male beings, lay prostrate on his arrowy bed, he marked the sun to be then in the southern solstice ; and that hero, considering that hour to be inauspicious for paying his debt to Nature, did not allow his senses to depart. Then desirous of yielding his life up during the northern solstice, the grandsire of the Kurus, Bhishma, though fallen on earth, still retained his vital breaths."

"When the grandsire of the Kurus, possessed of great strength, was overthrown, O foremost of the Bharatas, your sons knew not what to do. Then the Kurus grew totally confounded ; and Kripa and Durjodhana and others began to wail aloud. With their senses deprived in consequence of grief, they remained inert and

This is told by Sanjaya to the old blind king. See Mahavarata, Bhishma Parva, Chapter CXX.

did not think of fighting. They could not then rush against the Pandavas as if their thighs were locked. When that unslayable son of Santanu, Bhishma endued with great prowess, was overthrown, O king, the destruction of the Kuru princes became apparent.”*

* Though Bhishma fell, he did not then die. It is said he had the power of dying at pleasure. Finding that the sun was then in southern solstice, Bhishma did not give up his life, for to die at such a time was inauspicious. He waited for the northern solstice. He died many days after the end of the battle. At the conclusion of the war, the Pandavas went to pay their respects to the wounded hero and prayed to him to tell them something on religion, morals, statesmanship &c. The entire *Santi Parva*, the biggest Parva of the Mahavarata, contains Bhishma's teachings to the Pandavas. But this Parva can by no means be called a part of the original Mahavarata. It contains innumerable interpolations, or perhaps the whole of it is an interpolation. It might be called a great store-house of teachings, put into it by every sort of religious teachers, who made the celebrated Mahavarata, the medium to publish their views.

CHAPTER XVI.



THE DEATH OF ABHIMANYU.

THE Kurus held a council of war ; and at the suggestion of Karna, Durjodhana appointed the venerable preceptor, the great Drona, as the generalissimo of his mighty army. The battle raged again ;* and before the sun rolled that day down the horizon, the Pandavas with their army were fearfully mauled and routed to their camp. There was none in their army to withstand the onslaught of the great warrior Drona. If there were any, it was Arjuna ; but he studiously avoided his most beloved preceptor,—the man who made him what he was. And thus the Pandava army met with a severe defeat and retired crest-fallen to its camp.

Next day it was known all over the two camps that the great Drona had promised to Durjodhana that he would hand over the Pandava king Yudhishthira as a prisoner to the Kuru prince. The Pandavas were alarmed ; but they were confident that so long Arjuna would be at Yudhishthira's side Drona, or for the matter of that, any

* We shall no further quote any descriptions of this battle. They are mere so many repetitions,—descriptions of various single combats and hand-to-hand fights. We have already said these Parvas of the Mahavarata describing the battle are the worst portion of this great work. They are full of contradictions and unnatural and hyperbolic accounts. Repetitions of the same descriptions run all through their pages, and in them we find the chief characters of the work, such as Krishna, Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Durjodhana, Bhishma, Drona, Karna and others, have been painted in a colour which is quite foreign, nay impossible, to their character. We shall point them out as we proceed.

other Kuru warrior, would never be able to capture the Pandava king. But to make the matter worse, a challenge came to Arjuna from the *Sansaptakas*, the great Gopa warriors, who had been trained by Krishna himself, who had constituted his invincible army and whom Krishna had given to Durjodhana to fight on his side, he having come to the Pandavas promising not to fight in this battle. Though Arjuna knew that the wicked Durjodhana had artfully made Krishna's warriors to challenge him to fight that day so that he might not remain by the side of Yudhishthira to protect him, yet as a warrior, he had no other alternative; he accepted the challenge.

The battle raged fierce and hot all through the day. Krishna's Gopa warriors were each as powerful as perhaps he himself. It was, therefore, not a very easy task for Arjuna to defeat them and to hasten to his brother's protection. It was a great battle, and a wonderful battle that was fought that day. On the one side he alone, his charioteer being Krishna himself;—and on the other, hundreds of Gopa warriors, Krishna's most beloved friends, supporters and pupils. It was an extraordinary sight,—men that loved Krishna and Arjuna with all their heart did not hesitate that day to pierce them with the sharpest arrows, and Arjuna too cut them down without the least commiseration. And what did Krishna do? He looked at all this quite unconcerned. Who else could do it except he, and except the Man whom he paints in his wonderful Gita as the greatest model for the suffering humanity?

But here in his absence, Drona, Karna and other great Kuru warriors had put the Pandava army to rout,

Thousands had been killed, and the rest were flying in all directions, panic-stricken. Drona had arranged his army in a fearful *Buha** which none of the Pandava heroes could break. It was Arjuna who only had learnt from his preceptor Drona how to form it, how to enter it, how to exit from it and how to break it, but he had taught it only to his son Abhimanyu.

Finding no other escape, the Pandava king called the young prince Abhimanyu to his side and asked him to save his army in his father's absence by breaking the impenetrable *Buha* formed by the great preceptor. The young prince was only sixteen years of age, but he had grown to be even then as great a warrior as his father, for both Krishna and Arjuna had taken special pains to give him every possible training. But he had learnt as yet only how to enter the *Buha* formed by Drona ; he had not learnt how to get out of it ; but he did not mind it. At the command of the king, he rushed towards the Kurus, committing fearful havocks in their ranks. Bhima, Dhristadumna and all other great Pandava warriors hastened after him to support him and to aid him in breaking the Kuru *Buha*.

A battle, the most fierce of its kind, was fought. Young Abhimanyu defeated all the Kuru warriors, routed their troops and entered the impenetrable *Buha*. Bhima and others attempted to follow him, but they were

* *Buha* is a particular mode in which troops were arrayed in time of battle by a general. They were of various sorts, some time being circular in shape, sometime semi-circular, sometime square, and so forth. The *Buha* formed this day by Drona was like a triangle ; there was only one opening to it at the point where the two sides of the triangle meet.

stopped by Jayadhrata* and was routed by Drona. Thus did the young hero find himself alone and unsupported within the impenetrable *Buha* of the Kurus; surrounded and hemmed in by thousands and thousands of the enemy.

But he was matchless in prowess and arms. He routed the Kuru troops and defeated all the great car-warriors who came to fight with him, but he did not know how to come out of that great *Buha*, and therefore he had no other alternative but to fight till his father would come to his rescue.

In the meanwhile the great Kuru warriors were all alarmed at the superhuman prowess and skill in arms of the young Pandu prince. They found that it was impossible for any of them to defeat this young lion of the Kuru race; and if he was not speedily defeated, none of the Kuru army would escape at his hand. They held a consultation; and the great Kuru chiefs, —Vyasa is ashamed to narrate,—forgetting all rules of war and abandoning all morals and religion, all unitedly attacked this young scion of their own race. Nothing could have been more shameful and scandalous in the eyes of the ancient Aryans than this attack upon one by many. But the Kurus in their despair forgot all codes of honour, and seven of their greatest car-warriors, Drona, Karna and others, all at one time and all unitedly, attacked the helpless and unsupported young hero. One cut off his charioteer, another his horses; one his bow, another his shield; one his armour and another his arrows; but still the invincible young prince faught on

* Jayadhrata was the brother-in-law of Durjodhana. He was the ruler of Sindhu (modern Sind) and was a great warrior.

like a lion at bay. But how long such unequal contest could continue? Poor Abhimanyu fell to the shame of the entire Kuru race; and some body then cut off his head.* The Kuru army did not feel shame to shout out with joy, but the Pandavas were filled with the deepest grief. There was none who did not wept aloud crying "alas, alas!" They cried, "Alas poor Uttara and alas noble Subhadra!"† But their anger was greater than their grief; for they learnt how the Kurus in an unjust fight had killed their heroic boy by seven attacking one. They all eagerly waited for the return of Arjuna who was then engaged with the *Sansaptakas* and consequently did not know what great calamity had befallen his house. They all burnt with the bitterest vengeance, and they eagerly waited for Arjuna to lead them to inflict the severest punishment on the wicked and dishonest, renegade and treacherous Kurus for their cowardly conduct in murdering the boy, the mighty Abhimanyu, the idol of the entire Pandava, Panchala, Birata and Yadu races.

* It was done by the son of Dushasana.

† We need not say, Uttara, the beautiful princess of Birata, was the beloved wife of the young prince. She was only a year or two younger than Abhimanyu.

Subhadra was the mother of the young prince. Need we say that she was Krishna's sister and Arjuna's wife? Both Uttara and Subhadra were the most beloved princesses in the royal household of the Pandavas. There was none who did not love, respect and revere them with all their hearts. Beautiful Uttara was the airy, fairy moon-beam that played on that vast sea of warriors, and noble and heroic Subhadra with her motherly and sisterly love for all was the stream of ambrosia that flowed through the Pandava camp.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DEATH OF DRONA.

AFTER destroying the entire Gopa army,—the invincible *Sansaptakas*, the beloved friends, supporters and pupils of Krishna,—Arjuna retraced his steps towards the Pandava camp. It was evening ;—both the contending armies had retired to rest ;—but there was no joy, no merriment in the Pandava camp. The Kuru camp on the other hand was ablaze in innumerable bonfires ; it was rolling in ecstasy,—the joyous shouts of the Kuru warriors were rending the sky.

Seeing the camp joyless and melancholy, Arjuna thus spoke to Krishna. * “O friend, no joyous trumpets sound today. The warriors, seeing me, all recede away. They do not tell me, as they do every day, of the great feats they have performed. O Krishna, is it all well with my brothers ? Is it all well with the rulers of Panchala and Birata ? Why ever-cheerful Abhimanyu does not come today with his brothers to receive me with smiles ? Seeing our men plunged in grief, my mind knows no peace.”

They entered the camp. They soon knew what had happened. It is needless to mention that Arjuna was overwhelmed with grief when he heard that his ever dear Abhimanyu was no more. To him Krishna coolly and calmly, and without a tear in his eyes,

* See Mahavarata, Drona Parva, Chapter, LXXII.

spoke these words of consolation.* "Do not, O Arjuna, thus yield to grief. This is the way of all brave heroes. Death is certain to the heroes that know not how to retreat. Undoubtedly Abhimanyu has gone to heaven. This is what is gained by all brave men. Abhimanyu, after killing innumerable heroes, has met with that glorious death which is coveted by all warriors. Do not grieve for him. Your brothers are plunged in grief; comfort them in consoling words."

Arjuna rose up, and in the hearing of all the camp took a solemn oath, "Truly do I swear," said he, "I will kill Jayadratha to-morrow.† If to-morrow's sun sets without my killing him, I swear in the name of all that is holy that I will enter the blazing fire." The entire Pandava camp sent up a lion-like roar;—the Kurus started up and looked at one another in fear and awe. But Krishna grew grave. He knew that the Kurus would soon come to know of the vow taken by Arjuna. They would make the most strenuous efforts to save Jayadratha to-morrow. He knew it would not be at all easy for Arjuna to kill him before the sun-set of next day if the entire Kuru army determined to prevent it. And he knew also that if Arjuna failed to kill Jayadratha, he would be sure to give up his life in a blazing fire. He therefore called his charioteer Daruka and spoke to him thus.‡

"O Daruka, in grief for the death of his son, Arjuna has vowed that before to-morrow's sun goes down, he will

* Ibid.

† Jayadratha was at the gate of the *Buha* into which Abhimanyu entered. It was he who prevented Bhima and others to enter the *Buha* and to go to the help of the heroic young prince.

‡ See Mahavarata, Drona Parva, Chapter LXXIX.

kill Jayadrata. Hearing this, Durjodhana will assuredly take counsel with his advisers and take steps so that Arjuna may not be successful in his object. The life of Arjuna is in danger ; he must be saved any how. Therefore equip my car with all necessary weapons and follow me with it to-morrow. As soon as you hear the sound of my conch, bring it quick to me. If necessary I shall fight to-morrow and kill Jayadrata to save Arjuna's life."*

He then went to Subhadra and consoled her thus,†
 " O sister, do not grieve ; comfort your daughter-in-law. You know that all creatures have but one end ordained by *Kala*.‡ The end that your heroic son has undoubtedly met with fully becomes a hero of proud lineage as yours is. Do not therefore grieve. It is through a good luck that our brave Abhimanyu has met with an end ever coveted by heroes. He has gone to the eternal regions reserved for the pious and the brave. You are the mother of a hero ; you are the wife of a hero ; you are the daughter of a hero ; O Subhadra, you are the kinswoman of heroes ; you should not grieve for the death of

* It is evident Krishna determined to fight next day and help Arjuna to kill Jayadrata. His this determination to fight goes in no way against his promise that he would not fight in the battle of Kurushkhetra. The battle that would be fought that day was not the battle of Kurushkhetra which was being fought for the kingdom of the Pandavas,—a battle only in which Krishna promised not to fight. But the issue of the battle that was to be fought that day was either the death of Jayadrata or that of Arjuna, and not the winning of the Kuru kingdom. There was nothing therefore to prevent Krishna to take arms in such a battle. But our readers will find he had not to fight ; for without his help Arjuna was able to kill Jayadrata.

† See Mahavarata, Drona Parva, Chapter LXXVII.

‡ *Kala* is Time,—Death.

your son who has obtained the Supreme End by falling heroically fighting in a righteous battle."

The morning dawned ; the great battle began again. As expected the Kurus had made every possible arrangements to save Jayadrata from the fearful arrows of the wrathful Arjuna. They had placed him at the end of a formidable *Buha* ; they had placed him at the end of the battle array, putting their greatest warriors at its various points. If Arjuna was to kill Jayadrata that day, he had first to defeat the entire Kuru army with all its great warriors,—a task almost beyond all human power. But Arjuna, supported as he was by Krishna, was equal to it.

The battle raged fierce and furious all day till just before sun-set Arjuna, after routing the entire Kuru army and defeating all its great warriors, cut down the head of the great Sindhu king.* The Pandava army

* We must mention that some poetaster has made some embellishments in the description of Jayadrata's death. He writes that when Krishna found that it grew impossible for Arjuna to kill Jayadrata, he covered the sun by his Discus, and thus it became evening. Seeing this, the Kurus brought out Jayadrata in joy, when Krishna withdrew the Discus and Arjuna cut down his head.

He adds that Krishna then advised Arjuna to carry the head by the help of his arrows to the dense forest where sat Jayadrata's father in deep meditation. It was ordained that when any one would cut down Jayadrata's head,—no sooner it would touch the ground than,—the head of that one would be severed. So Krishna advised Arjuna to carry the head to the forest and place it on the hand of the father. It was done. The head was placed on the palms of the father who was in deep meditation with closed eyes. He started up and threw it down. Immediately his head was cut off, and it fell on the ground:

These are evident fictions and after additions. Any one who would take the trouble to read carefully the Mahavarata would come to the conclusion that these and other ridiculous descriptions were added to the Mahavarata when it was sung before the masses by songsters in order to make the story amusing. We need not say we have rejected all such descriptions.

roared and danced in joy,—the Kurus retired crest-fallen and sad. The blood of brave Abhimanyu was avenged and Arjuna's vow was kept. Durjodhana lost all hopes of victory.

The next day the battle grew more fearful. It was the sixth day that the Kurus fought under the leadership of great Drona, and for these six days the Kurus, if not victorious, were not defeated. But the Kuru preceptor Drona was too old to keep up his strength any longer in a fight which required more than superhuman energy. Daily did he grow fatigued and worn out. He found it no longer possible for him to continue the struggle. He therefore determined to die placing his soul at his last moment on the great unknowable Supreme One. He therefore threw up his bow and concentrated his mind in Brahma. When he was thus meditating on God, the heroic Pañchala prince Dristadumna jumped upon his chariot and cut off his head. The Kurus were struck with awe ;—they loudly bewailed the fall of their great preceptor and retired to their camp weeping.*

* One extraordinary incident has been added in the description of the death of Drona. It is written that when Krishna found it impossible for the Pandavas to kill Drona, he advised them to leave the path of righteousness and kill Drona by a most shameful stratagem. He advised them to go and tell Drona that his son Ashwathama was killed. If he heard this, he would be overwhelmed with grief and he would surely give up arms when it would be easy to kill him. Arjuna flatly refused to do it, but Yudhishthira hesitatingly agreed ;—Bhima then killed an elephant named Ashwathama and went to Drona and told him that his son was dead. The old Drona did not believe Bhima's word,—he would believe none except that embodiment of virtue Yudhishthira. So the Pandava king went and said, "Ashwathama was dead," adding in a low voice "Ashwathama the elephant." On hearing this, Drona left arms and Dristadumna cut off his head.

Before proving without a shadow of doubt that this story is a palpable fiction, we would ask our readers that after reading what

they have read in this humble work, are they prepared to believe that it is possible for Judhisthira to tell a lie,—Judhisthira who went to exile only to keep his word?—or for Krishna to advise it,—Krishna who spoke the Gita? Is it possible for great Vyasa to go suddenly so wrong as to make the characters of his great work assume such a changed appearance. Any one who has read the Mahavarata carefully will not believe it. It is as impossible for Bhima to be a coward or Durjodhana to be humble as for Judhisthira to tell lies and Krishna to advise it. This story was subsequently added to save the great Panchala dynasty from the reproach of their prince having killed a Brahman,—an act which in later age became one of the greatest sins amongst the Hindus. Any one who will take the trouble to carefully read the Mahavarata will find that the story is clearly an after addition.

We shall now state our reasons for rejecting the story.

(1) In the Mahavarata itself there are four different reasons given for Drona's giving up arms ;—(a) the elephant incident *i. e.*, the false news of Ashwathama's death ; (b) the words of the Rishis reproaching him for unnecessarily butchering thousands of men ; (c) Bhima's reproaches ; (d) his fatigue for continually fighting for six days. The first is, as we have said, quite unnatural and impossible ; the second is improbable as it is not possible for the Rishis to be present in the thick of the fight ; the third is not sufficiently strong reasons for Drona's giving up arms, as abuses were as a matter of course hurled by the combatants in a fight, and Bhima had very little control over his tongue. We, therefore, accept the fourth as the only reason and the most rational reason for Drona's leaving arms. The others must therefore be after additions.

(2) We reject the first *i. e.*, the elephant incident, because we find that even after Judhisthira's saying that Ashwathama was dead, Drona still fought on. He did not even then leave off his arms. See Mahavarata, Drona Parva, Chapter CXCI. What was the necessity then of telling this lie ?

(3) It is written in the Mahavarata itself that Ashwathama obtained immortality by his asceticism. Drona was fully aware of it. It is not possible that he should take even Judhisthira's word as truth knowing full well that his son *could not die*. It is also impossible that a man like Krishna should advise to say something which was in the face of it could not be taken as true. It is also impossible that Drona would not ask any one of his party to enquire whether Ashwathama was really dead or not. All this clearly indicates that this elephant incident is a story afterwards added to save the Panchala prince from the sin of killing a Brahman.

(4) There are four places in the Mahavarata in which short accounts of the death of Drona are given, namely (a) *Anukramanika Adhyaya i. e.*, Introductory chapter, (b) *Parva Sangraha-dhyaya i. e.*, chapter innumrating the Parvas, (c) chapters sixth and seventh of the Drona Parva, and (d) *Ashwamedhic Parva* where Krishna describes the battle to his father. No where in any of these four accounts of Drona's death, it is said that he gave up

arms on hearing from Judhisthira that his son was dead. Everywhere it is mentioned that he concentrated his mind in God when he grew fatigued in battle. If the story was in the original Mahavarata, it would have been surely mentioned in all these places.

(5) After the death of Drona, there was a great quarrel amongst the Pandava chiefs (See Mahavarata, Drona Parva, Chaps. CXCVIII. to CXCIX.). Arjuna strongly reproached Judhisthira for unjustly killing Drona. Bhima and Dristadumna reproached Arjuna; Satyaki took Arjuna's part. Every thing possible to be said was said by both the sides, but none said that Krishna had any thing to do with Drona's death. If he had really induced Judhisthira to speak the lies he would surely not have escaped the reproach.

We believe our readers will now agree with us when we say that this elephant incident is a palpable fiction afterwards added to the original story, and the real cause of Drona's death was his fatigue (which was originally Vyasa's version of the incident) and his great religious devotion, for which he gave up arms and concentrated his mind in God, determining to die instead of retiring from the field with ignomy and shame. It might be asked why this scandalous incident has been fastened on Krishna. It is very easy to explain. The answer would be, "because he was God, and to God, right or wrong, sin or virtue are all alike, for nothing touches him." The poetaster who made these foolish embellishments over the descriptions of great Vyasa has fastened on Krishna all wrongful acts done on the Pandava side, for he thought he thereby saved the reputation of the Pandavas without doing any harm to any body; for nobody would blame Krishna for anything as he is an incarnation of God. Such writers have done the greatest possible injury to our great religion and great men.

CHAPTER XVII.

DEATH OF KARNA.

THOUGH two of the greatest warriors of the Kurus had fallen, yet proud Durjodhana had not given up all hopes of victory ; still great Karna was alive, still he was by his side. It was he alone who could defeat Arjuna and destroy the Pandava army. With all pomp and granduer, therefore, he installed Karna as the next generalissimo of his great army. Trumpets were sounded, conchs were blown ; the Kurus shouted with joy and enthusiasm. They believed victory was still on their side.

A most fearful battle was fought.* Arjuna had all along fought with half-heartedness. He never exerted his powers to defeat his venerable grandfather and his most revered preceptor ; but now in the attempt to defeat and kill Karna, his rival in arms from the day he wielded the bow, he grew ten thousand times more mighty than he ever was. To defeat and to kill Karna was his life's object. At last that opportunity had come ; he rushed

* We have mentioned only the deaths of Bhishma, Abhimanyu, Drona, Karna and Durjodhana &c. But our readers must know these Parvas of the Mahavarata contain descriptions of the deaths of many other warriors belonging to both the armies. The evil genius of Durjodhana Sakuni was killed. The wicked Dushashana, the brother of Durjodhana, who dragged into the court the Panchala princess, the wife of the Pandavas, was killed just before the death of Karna. Irascible Bhima killed him and drunk his heart's blood, the vow he took when he saw Draupadi insulted by Dushasana in the open court. In fact before the fall of Karna, Durjodhana lost not only all his brothers, but almost all the great warriors, whereas none of note on the Pandava side was killed.

upon Karna like an enraged lion mad to taste blood. Great Karna too was as eager to defeat and kill Arjuna, his own younger brother,* as the Pandava hero was. The day had at last arrived when the world would see who was the greater warrior of the two,—Karna or Arjuna? From the day when these two great warriors met each other in the Kuru tournament, when they were but mere boys and were giving an exhibition of their skill in arms under the eye of the great preceptor, venerable Drona, from that day each of these two heroes was cherishing secretly in his heart the desire to show to the world that he was the greater hero of the two. So Karna with the strongest desire to defeat Arjuna made to day the great king of Madra, Salya, his charioteer† and rushed to battle.

Never on the sanguinary field of Kurushkhetra a more fearful battle was fought. None could withstand the fierce arrows hurled by great Karna which fell like a continuous shower of rain. The Panchalas fell fast,—the Pandava generals with all their exertion could not keep in order their great army. Karna mercilessly massacred their troops; he routed them with no hope of a rally.

* Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas, saw his eldest son Karna when battle was determined upon by the Pandavas and the Kurus. She prayed that Karna must not kill any of the five Pandavas. Karna promised to spare the lives of all except Arjuna. See Mahavarata. See also our note in vol. I pg. 79.

† Salya was the king of Madra. He was the brother of Madri, the mother of the two younger Pandavas, Nakul and Sahadeva; but he went over to the Kurus. When he was asked to be the charioteer of Karna, he took great offence, for the post of a charioteer was very derogatory to a royal prince. But our readers have seen Krishna gladly agreed to be Arjuna's charioteer when asked; to him honour and dishonour, praise and blame were all alike. It is needless to say in ancient Indian war-fare a good charioteer was a great help to a warrior. Salya was supposed to be only next to Krishna in the art of charioteership.

All hope of victory was destroyed, and the king, Judhisthira, precipitously fled from the field.

Bhima grinded his teeth in anger and asked Arjuna to follow the king and look to his safety. He told him not to be anxious for the battle; victory was quite safe in his hand. But Arjuna hesitated; he did not like to leave the field at such a crisis; but Krishna induced him to follow the Pandava king and see him safe in his camp. The real intention of Krishna, however, was to give Arjuna a little rest, so that he might face the great Karna fresh and strong when that great warrior would be fatigued and weak after fighting with all the other heroes of the Pandava army.*

So did it happen. When Arjuna faced with full vigour the greatest warrior of the Kuru army, his own eldest brother, the great Karna of invincible arms, he

* We are bound to mention that in Karna Parva of the Mahavarata Krishna gave Arjuna a long lecture on morality. We have not quoted this speech, because the incident which caused it appears to us an interpolation. It is mentioned that when Arjuna came to the camp to look after the safety of the king, Judhisthira, perhaps to hide his shame for flying from the field, strongly reproved Arjuna for leaving the battle, finally asking him to throw away his great bow *Gandiva*, as he was no longer worthy of wielding it. Now it was Arjuna's vow to kill the man who would ask him to throw away his *Gandiva*. Therefore he raised his sword to cut off Judhisthira's head. On seeing this Krishna read him a long lecture on morality. Arjuna submitted, and asked how he would be saved from violating his vow. Krishna advised him to abuse Judhisthira, for, he said, "the abuse of a younger brother to his elder is nothing but death to him."

The whole incident is in the face of it ridiculous. It is quite foreign to the character of Judhisthira to abuse Arjuna to hide his own cowardice. It is quite ridiculous that Arjuna should have taken such a vow, or he should have ever attempted to kill his brother Judhisthira whom he followed like a shadow in weal and in woe. Some writer created this incident in order to put into the Mahavarata his own views on morality. He then placed his verses in the Karna Parva.

found him worn out and fatigued after fighting with and defeating all the great warriors of the Padava army. But proud Karna was not a man to turn his back from a challenging foe. He at once rushed upon Arjuna with the vigour of ten thousand mad elephants ; and it was only through the superhuman excellence of the charioteer-ship of great Krishna that Arjuna's life was saved.*

The battle raged fierce and fearful. Two of the greatest warriors of the age exerted their utmost to defeat each other. They fought on as only they knew how to do it ; no pen can describe that fearful combat. At last one of the wheels of Karna's chariot suddenly stuck fast in the deep mud created by the blood of thousands of men killed on that most fearful day. He looked wild,—he grew helpless,—he jumped down from the car to get the wheel out of the mud. "Arjuna," cried he, "kindly excuse me only for a moment. You are well versed in all the rules of war. He who violates any of them commits a sin.† So long unarmed, I remain on the ground to

* It is mentioned in more than one place in these Parvas that the contending warriors used supernatural weapons. In the Drona Parva we find a great warrior named Vagadatta hurling the *Vaisnava* weapon against Arjuna. When Krishna found that his friend failed to stop it, he himself covered him with his body, and then the weapon hang round his neck as a garland of flowers. There are mentions of *Sarpa* weapons, producing thousands of snakes, of *Varuna* weapons producing flood &c. &c. We need not say we have rejected them all as being supernatural, for we have nothing to do in this work with supernatural matters.

† The following men should not be attacked by a warrior. This was an inviolable rule in ancient India. (1) A man whose hair is unbound ; (2) a man who has turned his back ; (3) a man who prays to be spared with joined palms ; (4) a man who has asked for protection ; (5) one who prays ; (6) one who has laid aside his weapons ; (7) one who has no arrows ; (8) one whose armour is gone ; (9) one who has lost his bow and ; (10) one who has his bow broken.

get out the wheel of my chariot from the mud, kindly do not strike me. You are a son of a warrior,—a warrior yourself; remembering the path of righteousness, kindly wait for a moment.”

Unfortunately for Karna, he mentioned the path of righteousness in an evil moment. Motioning Arjuna to wait, Krishna thus reproved him. “O hero, you now remember the path of righteousness! The low-minded men when afflicted with misery generally blame Providence; they never look at their own wicked deeds. Where was your sense of virtue and righteousness when with your consent Durjodhana, Dushashana and Sakuni dragged into the open court Draupadi, the Panchala princess, clad in only one cloth? Where was your sense of righteousness when with your consent Sakuni deceitfully defeated in a game of dice Yudhisthira, who was not proficient in the play? Where was your sense of righteousness when you allowed Durjodhana to set fire to the house of lac* in order to burn the Pandavas to death? Where was your sense of righteousness when you seven great warriors surrounded the young boy Abhimanyu and murdered him forgetting all rules of war? O Karna, when you have all along committed unrighteous acts, it does not behove you now to speak of the path of righteousness. The wicked and sinful sons of Dhritarastra with all their wicked advisers will surely perish at the hand of the ever virtuous Pandavas.”†

Karna did not reply; he had no face to reply. With

* See our note in Vol. I., pg. 80.

† See Mahavarata, Karna Parva, Chapter 91st. Krishna meant to say “Virtue would always triumph.”

one superhuman effort, he raised up the wheel of his chariot from the mud and leaped upon his car. Arjuna, at the motion of Krishna, stood quiet till Karna took his bow and stringed his fearful arrows. The great combat began again, and the sky was covered with the arrows that the two invincible heroes hurled upon each other. They fought on till at last the great and mighty Karna, the right hand of the proud prince Durjodhana, the pillar of the Kuru empire, fell dead from his ever brilliant chariot. The Pandavas and the Panchalas sent up such a tremendous shout in joy that earth trembled as it were from pole to pole. The Kurus fled away in alarm ; they ran in all directions ; and the great army of proud Durjodhana dwindled down for ever.*

* We have already said these Parvas are full of matters which are apparent interpolations. We have rejected them all, but we believe we are bound to mention at least one instance to give our readers some idea of them. In Drona Parva, Mahavarata, an account of a dream is given. it is said that Krishna and Arjuna went to the Himalayas and worshipped Siva. Though it is mentioned in the Vana Parva that Arjuna obtained the *Pashupat* weapon from Siva, yet here again it is narrated that he prayed for it and obtained it &c &c.

CHAPTER XVIII.



DEATH OF DURJODHANA.

It is needless to say that Durjodhana lost all hope of victory when great Karna fell. But though his old preceptor Kripa earnestly solicited him even then to make treaty with the Pandavas,* yet the proud Kuru prince did not listen to his sage advice; he determined to fight on either to victory or to death. Next morning he appointed the king of Madra, the great warrior Salya, as the generalissimo of his army and advanced to give battle to his enemies.

Before the day far advanced, Salya fell at the hand of the Pandava king Yudhishthira. The Kuru army lost heart, the soldiers,—now reduced to only a few thousands from eleven *Akshahaunis* †,—were seized with panic. They broke ranks and fled away in all directions; it was hopeless to make an attempt to rally them. The proud prince saw that his great army dwindled away before his very eyes. His face grew red and then as pale as ashes. He lost all heart; he jumped upon a horse and fled away from the field alone and unattended. The great battle was thus lost and won. The Kurus fled away towards Hastinapur pursued by the Panchalas.

* See Mahavarate, Salya Parva, chapter IV.

† It is said when the Kurus fled away, the Pandavas had only two thousand car-warriors, seven hundred elephants, five thousand horse-men and ten thousand infantry out of seven *Akshahaunis*. For *Akshahaunis* see our note in Vol I, pg 63.

The Pandavas took possession of the Kuru camp cheering vociferously for their great victory.*

Proud Durjodhana rode as fast as his horse could carry him to the outskirts of an extensive forest. He then got down from the horse, and with his club on his shoulder he walked into the forest till he came to a lake. There he took his seat determining never again to show his face to any human being. †

But the Pandavas were in hot pursuit. They searched every place where he could possibly lay hidden, but all their search proved fruitless. They at last got informations from some hunters that he was hiding himself in the forest. They all hastened towards it and soon came to his track. But they could not find out his hiding place. Therefore the Pandava king, raising his voice high, cried, "O Durjodhana, you are a disgrace to our race. Being a warrior, are you afraid to fight? Come out and fight with us. If you kill any of us, I shall give up all claim over the kingdom and go back to the forest. Fight and win the kingdom, or win heaven by falling in a fair fight."

"Yes," said Durjodhana coming out from his hiding place, "I shall fight with all of you and revenge the death of Bhisma, Drona, Karna and my brothers. But I shall no longer fight for the kingdom. I bestow it upon you as a gift. Rule over a kingdom which is now a desert. Such kingdoms are not to be ruled by Durjodhana!"

* See Mahavarata, Salya Parva, chapter xxix.

† It is mentioned that Durjodhana lay hidden underneath the water of a lake. As it is not possible for a human being to live at the bottom of a lake, we have rejected this story. Possibly it is only an allegory.

"O Durjodhana," said Judhisthira, "I shall not accept the kingdom as a gift from you. I again say, come and fight with us. If you can kill any of us, your kingdom will be yours,—we shall again go back to the forest."

"Well," replied Durjodhana, "I shall fight with my club. Who is equal to me in club-fight? I shall not condescend to fight with such insignificant club-fighters as you or Arjuna. I shall therefore fight with Bhima and shall send him to Yama's abode." *

They faught like two mad elephants. Both possessed herculian strength and wonderful skill in using the club. They faught on till at last Bhima finding an opportunity hit with his club the thigh of the Kuru prince. The club fell on it like a thunderbolt and smashed it to atoms. Proud Durjodhana fell on the ground and fainted away. †

* We give the conversation in brief. See Mahavarata, Salya Parva, chapter 31st.

† An apparent interpolation is here made. It is mentioned that when the Pandavas saw that it was not possible to kill Durjodhana in a fair fight, Krishna asked Arjuna to give a hint to Bhima to kill the Kuru prince by an unfair means. Arjuna at once slapped his thigh as if to encourage Bhima, but in reality to suggest to Bhima to strike at the thigh of Durjodhana. According to the rules of war it was unfair to strike below the navel of a warrior,—it was therefore most unfair for Bhima to hit the Kuru prince at the thigh, but he did it, for he vowed to do it when in the open court Durjodhana slapped his thighs and asked Draupadi to sit on them,—a vow which he forgot, but remembered at the hint given by Arjuna. The reason why we say this story is an interpolation is that it is quite against the characters so long described by the great Vyasa. The great chronicler himself wrote, "Where is Krishna, there is Virtue. Where is Virtue there is Victory." Is it at all possible that Krishna of all men who always asked the Pandavas to tread on the path of virtue would now ask them to kill a man by an unfair means? Is it possible that Arjuna who reproached Dhristadumna for killing the preceptor when he was meditating on God,—

Then did Bhima again and again kick at the head of the dying Kuru prince. "O villain," said he, "Now take this for the insult you offered to the Panchala princess in the open court." King Judhisthira came forward and reproved Bhima for his conduct. "O hero," said he, "you should not kick at the head of this prince. He is a king, he is our relative,—you should not treat him in this way as he is now dead."

Finding that the Panchalas were hurling cruel words to the fallen Durjodhana, Krishna said, "It is not proper to tease with cruel words a fallen enemy. He has met with the fate he deserved. Let us now return to our camp." *

The Pandavas and the Panchalas came back to the field of Kuruskhetra and Judhisthira asked Krishna to go to Hastinapur to console the old blind king Dhritarastra and his queen Gandhari. But consolation had no place in Hastinapur. From every house rose heart-rending lamentations of bereaved women who wept aloud at the loss of their husbands, sons, brothers or fathers. There was no joy in the victory that the Pan-

Arjuna than whom there was none who observed all the rules of war, now so far forgot himself as to induce Bhima to kill the Kuru king by a most unfair way? Is it also possible that Bhima would ever forget his fearful vow? He vowed that he would drink the heart's blood of Dushasana; and he did it without any hint from any body. Would he require any hint from any body now to strike at the thigh of Durjodhana? He knew full well when he vowed to do it that it was not fair and it was against all the established rules of war; but still he took the vow, and now he kept it. He surely required no hint from any body; his idea of morals was not so high as that of Arjuna or Judhisthira.

Our readers may ask, why then this story is at all created? We would refer them for the answer to our note *re* the death of Drona.

See Mahavarata, Salya Parva, chapter 59th.

davas gained. Their cheers soon ceased,—their hearts grew damped, and when thousands of women came weeping on the field of battle to find out the dead bodies of their dear ones, tears rolled down the cheeks of every man.

The little joy that lay in the deep recesses of their heart was also destroyed next day. On the night following the day in which Durjodhana fell, Ashwathama, burning with mad revenge, stealthily entered the Pandava camp and murdered in their sleep the five sons of Draupadi, the two Panchala princes, Dhristadumna and Shikhandin, and many others.* The five Pandava brothers escaped only because fortunately they did not sleep in the camp on that fatal night.† When morning broke and when the fearful massacre was discovered, ‡ the whole camp was filled with loud lamentations.

* It is mentioned that when dying, Durjodhana made Ashwathama the next generalissimo of his broken down army. The new commander, having no army to command, stealthily entered the Pandava camp and wrecked his vengeance by murdering the sleeping men.

It is further mentioned that when these foul murders were discovered the Pandavas sought for Ashwathama in every direction. When they came upon him, he, finding no other escape, hurled the *Bramhasira* weapon against the Pandavas. This *Bramhasira* weapon is an extraordinary thing. Though it failed to do any harm to the five Pandavas, yet it struck at the child that was in Uttara's womb.

We need not say all these are after additions. See *Sauptik Parva*, Mahavarata.

† It is mentioned that Krishna asked the Pandavas to pass that night in some place outside the camp, for, he said, it would be auspicious.

‡ After the description of the fall of Durjodhana, all that is found in the Salya Parva of the Mahavarata are apparent interpola-

tions. If our readers take the trouble to read this portion of the Mahavarata, they will find that Durjodhana charged Krishna with all the wicked acts performed in the battle,—all his charges being based on no truth. Then he will find Krishna who reproved others for using cruel words to a dying foe hurling foulest abuses on the dying Durjodhana. Then they will find that Durjodhana who is described all through the Mahavarata as the wickedest of the wicked going to heaven in a celestial chariot &c. Is there any one who would take these descriptions to be penned by the great poet Vyasa?

CHAPTER XIX.



THE PANDAVAS AT HASTINAPUR.

THE battle was over.* The great kingdom of Hastinapur had been flooded with the tears of orphans and widows. The Kurus that had survived the fearful battle fled away in all directions from the fear of the vengeance of their hereditary foes the Panchalas.† The once-smiling and prosperous kingdom of Kurujangala had turned into a fearful desert.

Judhisthira wept and shed bitter tears. His soft and ever gentle heart bled at the thought of the most lamentable plight to which he had brought the ever-glorious kingdom of his forefathers. He called Arjuna and his other brothers and said that he was unable to live in such a kingdom amidst such a fearful weeping; he would go back to the forest and live away from all pomp and grandeur. It was far more preferable to live

* This chapter is culled from no less than five Parvas of the Mahavarata, namely *Stree Parva*, *Santi Parva*, *Anushashana Parva*, *Ashwamedha Parva* and *Asrambasika Parva*. We have mentioned here only that which appears to us based on historical facts. There are two incidents in the *Stree Parva* in connection with Krishna, both of which we have rejected. It is narrated that the blind Dhritarashtra with the intention of killing Bhima desired to embrace him. Suspecting his intention, Krishna made an iron Bhima and gave it to him to embrace. The story in the face of it is ridiculous.

The other incident is about Gandhari's curse on Krishna. When Krishna went to console her, she cursed him saying that his family and he himself would be destroyed by an internal dispute.

† Our readers are already aware that the Panchalas were born enemies of the Kurus. They showed no mercy to them when they were routed. See Mahavarata, *Salya Parva*.

on alms than to have the sovereignty of such a desert-empire. Arjuna, Bhima, Draupadi and every one else attempted to console him and to induce him to go to Hastinapur and to assume the sovereignty; but the gentle-hearted Pandava king put a deaf ear to all their entreaties; he said he would go to the forest to make propitiation for the great sin he had committed by killing his kinsmen and friends.*

At last the great Vrisni prince, the guiding spirit of the Pandavas, Krishna, spoke.† At his word the weak-minded Yudhishthira got heart. He then in great solemnity and grandeur entered the city of Hastinapur where he was in due form installed on the ancient throne of the great Kurus as the king of all the kings of the Aryan lands.‡

Krishna then asked the Pandava king to wait upon the old patriarch of the Kuru race, the venerable Bhishma, who was then lying wounded, waiting for the auspicious northern solstice to give up his soul to God. He asked Yudhishthira to learn from the dying hero all that ought to be learnt by a king about religion, morals, statesmanship, diplomacy, politics and domestic life; for he said, "Bhishma is the great store-house of all learning and wisdom. When he dies,—with him will die all learning and wisdom that he has acquired all through his long, virtuous and glorious life. Therefore, O sire, learn from him all that ought to be learnt to make your people happy" §

* The speeches of Arjuna and others are too long to be quoted.

† We do not think it necessary to quote Krishna's speech.

‡ Thus did Krishna, making the most virtuous king the suzerain of all India, established the Kingdom of Righteousness in the world.

§ Thus did Krishna, making Bhishma the spokesman, declared

The Pandava king with all his brothers, ministers and relatives went to the place where lay on a bed of arrows the great patriarch of the Kuru race. They all bowed down their heads to him they touched his feet in token of the great veneration that they bore for him. Old Bhishma blessed them each individually by touching their heads with his now feeble but once most powerful hand.

When the Pandavas took their seat round the old Kuru chief, Krishna thus spoke to him with all due respect. "You are old in age, you are vastly learned in the *Sastras*, you are pure and holy. The duties of a king as well as every thing else are all known to you. Not a fault has ever touched you from your birth. All the kings call you learned in all the *Dharmas*; * therefore like a father teach these kings morals, religion, statesmanship and all else that they ought to know."†

"O Lord," replied Bhishma, "You are the source of all *Dharmas* and *Karmas*.‡ You know every thing. Teach Yudhisthira and the Pandavas all that they ought to know. I am in my death-bed and my memory is failing."

Krishna repeatedly pressed, him; the Pandavas and the others intreated him with joined hands; all cried, "Glory be to Bhishma, the great and the good!"

Thus pressed, Bhishma slowly began to deliver his wonderful teachings,—teachings on religion, morality,

to the world all rules,—you may call all legislations,—to be observed as regards morality, religion, statesmanship, domestic life &c &c.

* Here *Dharma* means "morality, religion, duty, statesmanship &c. See our note in vol I.

† See Mahavarata, Santi Parva.

‡ See our note in vol II.

statesmanship, domestic life and on everything else that a man ought to know. He talked on till his breaths failed, and the auspicious northern solstice appeared when placing his soul on God he breathed his last.*

Judhisthira was overwhelmed with grief. Bhisma was a father to him from his childhood, and at his death he knew not consolation. He wept aloud like a child falling at the feet of the dead patriarch. What pleasures and happiness were there for him when all that were dear and near to him were gone! He resolved to retire from the world and pass his life in the solitude of a forest. Every one attempted to console him, but he knew no consolation.

Again Krishna spoke. "O king," said he, "you have not been able as yet to destroy all your enemies. Do you not see that there lives within your body a great enemy called *Ahankara*?"† He then told him an allegorical story showing how this great enemy of man, this *Ego*, this Pride for Self, could be destroyed.‡ He then advised him to perform great sacrifices such as *Ashwamedha* and others.§

* See our note in vol III, pg 82.

† The word *Ahankara* is very difficult to be translated into English. It means the "Consciousness of Ego." "I do this. I did that" this sense of pride of *I* or *Self* is *Ahankara*.

‡ This speech of Krishna is a long one. It is known by the name of *Kama Gita*. As the *Gita* covers all the teachings of Srikrishna, we do not think it necessary to quote this *Kama Gita* in *extenso*.

§ We believe except Krishna none would have been able to diagnose the *disease* that was in Judhisthira's heart. Surely it was nothing else but *Ahankara*, the sense of Pride of Self, which made him think that *he* caused the battle and killed his relatives and friends. This excessive sense of Pride of Self—*Ahankara*,—made him weep and desire to go to exile.

Judhisthira did not retire into a forest ; he ascended the throne of Hastinapur and began to make preparations to perform the great *Ashwamedha* sacrifice with all pomp and grandeur. *

In the meanwhile Krishna with the permission of the Pandavas went back to his own city of Dwaraka. † He took with him his sister Subadhra who was silently pining away at the loss of her only child,—the most beloved boy that ever wielded a bow. ‡

A few months after Krishna with many other Yadu chiefs once more came to Hastinapur to be present at the *Ashwamedha* sacrifice of the king Judhisthira. When he arrived, there was no joy and merriment in the palace of the Pandavas ; loud lamentations were heard from every side ; Uttara, the widowed princess, had given birth to a dead child,—the child who was the only hope of the Pandavas. He was to continue their Dynasty ; with his death the great Kuru dynasty became extinct.

As soon as Draupadi and Subhadra heard of the arrival of Krishna, they ran towards him, they fell at his feet, they wept aloud ; they intreated him, they prayed to him to revive the child. None could withhold tears at their heart-rending lamentations.

Perhaps except Krishna none would have been able to prescribe the proper remedy for this fell disease. Krishna asked him to perform great sacrifices, the pomp and grandeur of which he knew will satisfy his Pride of Self.

* Here three big works have been added to the Mahavarata in the name of Krishna, namely *Anu Gita*, *Sanatsu Gita* and *Brahman Gita*. See Telang's *Gita*.

† There are some ridiculous stories narrated in connection with Krishna's journey to Dwarka. We reject them.

‡ When Krishna arrived at Dwarka he briefly narrated what had taken place in the battle.

Krishna consoled them by saying, "Yes, I shall revive the child ;" and he then went to the place where sat poor Uttara,—a mere child herself,—bewailing over the corpse of her dead child. When she saw Krishna, she burst out into loud lamentations. She fell at his feet ; she wept crying, "O sire, I shall kill myself if my child does not revive."

Krishna took up the child on his lap and said, "I have never told a lie in my life ; I have never retired from a battle ; if I have obtained any virtue by my these acts, let this child revive by that virtue. As virtue and piety are beloved to me, so was my boy Abhimanyu. Therefore let this child revive. I have never quarrelled with Arjuna, therefore let this child revive. Virtue and truth always stay in me, therefore let this child revive."

Gradually and slowly did the child revive to the joy of his mother and grandmothers, to the joy of the Pandavas and the whole populace of Hastinapur.*

The great *Ashwamedha* sacrifice was solemnised with all pomp. The royal guests of the Pandavas went away to their respective kingdoms ; Krishna also came back to his own city. He bade the Pandavas a loving farewell, and it was his last farewell to his beloved friends and relatives.†

* Our readers are aware that Krishna was a master in the healing art. See vol I, pg 54.

† We believe the original Mahavarata ended with the birth of the child of Uttara who was named Parikhshita and who ultimately ascended the throne of Hastinapur. But the present Mahavarata contains three more Parvas. We shall have something to do with them later on.

CHAPTER XX.

THE LAST DAYS OF SRIKRISHNA.

THUS establishing the Kingdom of Righteousness in the world * Krishna retired to his own city of Dwarka and lived there for many years † a life of peace, happiness, and pleasure,—a life which only he knew what it was. ‡

Thus passed many years till at last a fearful dissension arose amongst the Yadus. § They were, of many clans, ever fighting and quarrelling amongst themselves.||

* Our readers have seen that Krishna caused to be removed all the tyrants from the face of the earth. All the vicious and the wicked were killed and a most virtuous king was placed on the throne of the Aryan land thereby making all the people happy and comfortable. He then through old Bhishma declared to the world all the rules of domestic life, morality, statesmanship and religion. He himself declared to the suffering humanity the loftiest religion ever preached, thus pointing to mankind the path of eternal bliss. Thus the kingdom of Righteousness was established and his work was done.

† It is mentioned he died thirty six years after the battle of Kurushkhetra.

‡ It is impossible to say what he really was. His life is beyond our conception.

§ The history of the last days of Srikrishna is more vague and meagre than even that of his early days. It is evident that the original Mahavarata ended with the birth of Parishkhita,—but there are three Parvas to be found in the present Mahavarata which narrate subsequent events that took place after the birth of this Pandu prince. One of them, namely the *Mushala Parva*, deals with the history of Srikrishna as regards the last days of his life. What this *Mushala Parva* narrates has also been narrated by the Puranas and Harivansa. This is the only incident that has been narrated by the Mahavarata as well as by the Puranas. We have already said in vol I. (See pg 68) that the accounts of Srikrishna as given by the Puranas are full of fictions and fables. This *Mushala Parva* is no exception.

|| See our note in vol I. pg 70.

It was the great personality of Srikrishna that kept them in check and prevented them from flying at one another's throats.

They were ever proud and vain. The great and high position that their Krishna held in India made them prouder and vainer. They cared none; they bullied all; they daily grew more vicious, wicked and tyrannical. * For the sake of great Krishna none uttered a word of complaint against them; people suffered their tyranny in silence. Though Krishna had removed all the wicked and the vicious from the face of the earth, yet his own people, the Yadus, grew more wicked and sinful than any of them ever was.

His work was not done yet; he asked them to go to the holy Pravasa † and there to pass some days in religious performances; for at this time various evil omens were seen in Dwarka. ‡

The different clans of the Yadu race all accompanied Srikrishna with the greatest pomp and grandeur to the sacred coast of the dark blue sea, there to bathe and to perform religious rites, to amuse and to make merry. § Only the women, the children and the old men were left behind.

They made themselves merry in various ways; they drank to their fill. They then quarrelled amongst them-

* They became so much addicted to drink that their chief proclaimed that capital sentence would be passed on all those who would touch liquor. See Mahavarata, Mushala Parva, chapter I.

† Pravasa is near Porebander in Guzrat.

‡ It is mentioned that various evil omens were seen in Dwarka at this time. See Mahavarata, Mushala Parva, chapter II.

§ They carried many hundred casks of liquor with them. See Vishnu Purana, Part IV., Mahavarata, Mushala Parva.

selves and rose against one another. * A great battle was fought on that holy shrine, the sacred Pravasha, and the entire Yadu race was destroyed. † Only four were left alive, namely Krishna, his brother Balarama, his charioteer Daruka and one Yadu chief named Bavru. After the battle Balarama quietly went to the sea and there gave up his life.

Krishna then sent Daruka to Hastinapur to inform the Pandavas what had happened and to ask Arjuna to come to Dwarka and to look after the women and children of the Yadu race. He then went back to Dwarka, consoled the weeping women and children and asked them to wait till Arjuna would come. He advised them to go with the Pandava prince to

* It is said that Satyaki reproved Kritavarma for his helping Ashwathama in his night massacre. Prudumna, the son of Krishna, took Satyaki's part. Then Satyaki cut off Kritavarma's head. Kritavarma's men then killed Prudumna. Thus a general fight began.

† A most absurd story has been told in all the Puranas and the Mahavarata in connection with the destruction of the Yadu race. It is said that one day some of the Yadus made fun with three great Rishis. They dressed Samba, one of the sons of Krishna, in a female attire and taking him to the Rishis, asked them what child the supposed woman would give birth. The Rishis at once knew what mischievous pranks the impudent Yadus were playing. They grew fearfully angry and cursed them saying that an iron bar would be produced from the womb of the woman and this bar would destroy the entire Yadu race. The Yadus were alarmed, they all hastened to Krishna and told him what had happened. He advised them to take the iron bar to the sea and rub it to ores and thus wash it away. It was done. It was then added that from these iron ores were produced innumerable long grasses, which were used as weapons by the Yadus when they fought at Pravasha.

Should we say this story is one of the many that was added by the songsters to make the Mahavarata amusing to the masses? When this happened Samba was more than fifty years of age. Is it possible for a man of his age to play such pranks?

Hustinapur and leave Dwarka to be engulfed by the sea. He then bidding them all a loving farewell left his beloved city for ever and retired into the deepest forest.

Arjuna hastened to Dwarka as soon as he heard what great calamity had befallen the Yadus. He took with him the remnant of the great Yadu race, the weeping children, women and old men to Hastinapur, and installed the only grandson of Srikrishna, the five years old prince Bazra.† on the throne of Suresenaka, the ancient kingdom of the Yadu race. ‡

Srikrishna, the unknowable, lived in the forest we do not for how many years. When the proper time came he went away from this world, § —to come back again when it would be necessary to do it for the good of the suffering humanity. || Such is the great love He bears for mankind !

Glory be unto Him and glory be unto us that we are his creatures,—nay each of us is His own Great Self.

* It is mentioned that as soon as the Yadu women and children left Dwarka, it was immediately engulfed by the sea.

† Krishna's son was Pradumna ; Pradumna's son was Annirudha and Annirudha's son was Bazra. It is mentioned Krishna gave up his life at the age of one hundred and twenty five years.

‡ Many absurd stories are here told. We reject them all. We believe we must mention here that after the ascension of Sri-Krishna, the Pandavas installed their grandson Parishkhita on the throne and retired into the Himalayas.

§ It is mentioned that when Srikrishna was engaged in deep-meditation in the forest, a hunter named *Jara* by mistake shot an arrow at his feet and this caused his death. This story is evidently an allegory. *Jara* means old age. The story clearly means that he died of "old age."

|| See his own words in the Gita

